

STATE REPRESSION AND POPULIST DISCOURSE: A COMPARATIVE CASE
STUDY OF GEZI PARK MOVEMENT, OCCUPY WALL STREET MOVEMENT
AND THE EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION

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Master of Arts / Science



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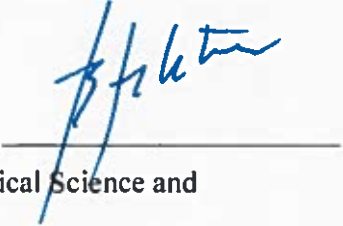
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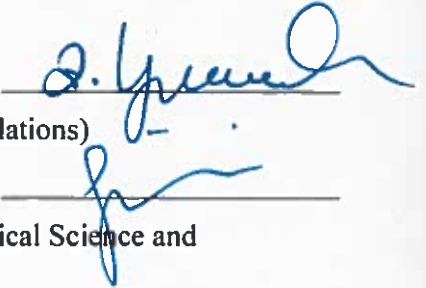
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Ümmiye Şeyda ÇAĞLAN

ABSTRACT

STATE REPRESSION AND POPULIST DISCOURSE: A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF GEZİ PARK MOVEMENT, OCCUPY WALL STREET MOVEMENT AND THE EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION

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Why do democracies repress nonviolent civilian mobilization? Why do democracies use populist discourse as a response to nonviolent civilian mobilization? This thesis examines the effect of populist discourse on state repression of nonviolent civilian mobilization. The central claim of this thesis is that governments respond to nonviolent civilian mobilization with populist discourse, i.e., independent variable, to expand the limits of political opportunities for repression. I built on the literature by including an independent variable, namely populist discourse, to the existing model of repression and mobilization. The causal effect of “populist discourse” is tested through a structured and focused comparative case study, namely most similar systems analysis, through which I compare Gezi Park Movement, the Egyptian Revolution and Occupy Wall Street Movement. These three cases provide evidence that the populist discourse effects state repression of nonviolent mobilization.

Keywords: State Repression, Populist Discourse, Social Movement, Mobilization.

ÖZ

DEVLET BASKISI VE POPÜLİST SÖYLEM: GEZİ PARK HAREKETİ, WALL STREET'İ İŞGAL ET HAREKETİ VE MİSİR DEVRİMİ ÜZERİNE KARŞILAŞTIRMALI BİR ANALİZ

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Demokrasiler neden şiddet içermeyen sivil hareketleri baskırlar? Demokrasiler, şiddet içermeyen sivil hareketlere tepki olarak neden popülist söyleme başvururlar? Bu sorulara cevap verebilmek için, bu tez popülist söylemin şiddet içermeyen sivil hareketlerin baskılanması üzerindeki etkisini incelemektedir. Bu tez temel olarak hükümetlerin baskı kurmak için gereken siyasal fırsatların sınırlarını genişletmek adına şiddet içermeyen sivil hareketlere tepki olarak popülist söyleme, i.e. bağımsız değişken, başvurduklarını iddia etmekte ve var olan baskı ve mobilizasyon modeline bir bağımsız değişken ekleyerek literatüre katkı yapmaktadır. Bu değişken, yapılandırılmış karşılaştırmalı vaka çalışması yoluyla Gezi Park Hareketi, Mısır Devrimi ve Wall Street'i İşgal Et Hareketi'nin karşılaştırıldığı bir yöntem ile test edilmektedir. Bu vakalar populist söylemin, şiddet içermeyen sivil hareketlerin devlet tarafından baskılanmasında etkili olduğunu ispatlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Devlet Baskısı, Popülist Söylem, Sosyal Hareket, Mobilizasyon.

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ABBREVIATION LIST

ACC: Ataturk Cultural Center

EU: European Union

JDP: Justice and Development Party

NAC: National Assembly for Change

NDP: National Democratic Party

OWS: Occupy Wall Street

RPP: Republican Peoples Party

US: United States



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

21st century had witnessed great amounts of social movements, protests, and collective civilian action. The study of social movements has needed to expand its scope of investigation in order to keep pace with changing causes and outcomes of mobilization. With the developments in communication technologies and introduction of social media, organizing civilian dissent and mobilizing necessary sources for a systematic opposition have become easier than ever. Considering the growing number and intensity of civilian disobedience, it is fair to expect more civilian mobilization in the future. Moreover, some responses of states to civilian mobilization raise concerns in the world society for these responses might violate human rights. Therefore, understanding civilian mobilization and its outcomes has gained priority in social sciences.

One interesting aspect of civilian mobilization is that states respond differently to similar examples of mobilization. While some states repress mobilization, others do not. The difference in state repression to similar civilian mobilization suggests that there are factors, which cause the variation in state repression, and which are independent from the mobilization. Then, what are these factors that cause the difference in state repression of nonviolent mobilization? While this question outlines the general scope of interest of this study, it is not the puzzle to solve in this study. The puzzle, and the research question of this study, is that why some states

that are not autocracy repress nonviolent mobilization similar to autocracies? Does government type explain this oddity?

Explaining this empirical puzzle requires a review of contentious politics literature, which revolves around the question of in which cases states respond to nonviolent civilian mobilization with repression. I argue that populist discourse cause state repression. Hence, the primary hypothesis which will be subject to empirical testing is;

Hypothesis 1: Populist discourse increase repression of nonviolent mobilization.

This hypothesis leads to the assumption that government leaders appeal to populist discourse to increase opportunities for repression when opportunities created directly by non-democratic means are not available.

Based on the main argument, we can also argue that pluralist states do not appeal to populist discourse because most of the channels of repression are closed and populism cannot be effective in pluralist states. Therefore, one auxiliary hypothesis of this study is;

Hypothesis 1a: Populist governments repress nonviolent mobilization more than democratic governments.

Based on the main hypothesis, we can also argue that leaders of authoritarian governments do not appeal to populist discourse to increase opportunities for repression, because they already have all the means of repression available. Therefore, the second auxiliary hypothesis of this study is;

Hypothesis 1b: Populist governments repress nonviolent mobilization less than autocratic governments.

Having opportunities does not mean governments always use them. In other words, there are plural causes of state repression that must be simultaneously present to produce repression as an outcome. Therefore, the use of populist discourse may not always give the predicted outcome.

The scope of this study is limited to cases of repressed nonviolent mobilization that has national scale. This limitation has two folds. First is that all mobilization follows a similar process from its emergence to its decline. Repression is one of the five options preceding decline, other four being success, failure, cooptation, and going mainstream (Tilly 1978). It is important to emphasize that this study is not interested in other four options and it is limited to cases of repression.

Second is that for the sake of generalizability, this study ignores the unique sociological features of the cases subject to examination and limits the scope to disorganized nonviolent mobilization. Nonviolent does not necessarily mean that violent tactics are not employed by challengers. Indeed, the cases examined in this study contain examples of violent actions by protesters such as harm to public property and clash with security forces. And in cases that has such large scale; it is not unexpected to see some groups that capitalize on the moments of lack of state control. Nonviolent means that there is not any planned and organized armed violence of non-state actors that confront the government illegitimately or that target human life. It also means that the movement is rooted in civilian action.

The purpose of this study is to discover the variation of state repression in similar cases of mobilization. It is important to understand the causes of repression for two reasons. First, repression is a serious violation of universal human rights. In addition to hard repression such as death, arrest, or other physical violations, it includes soft

repression such as creation of an unfavorable public image. The results of this study would hopefully help the community who works on eliminating violations of human rights in their policy-making. Second, as the number of civilian mobilization around the world increase, the instances of repression increase as well. The results of this study could function as a guide for policy makers in civil society.

This thesis builds on the literature of contentious politics. Contentious politics is a part of political sociology, and it is not grounded in any tradition. There are different lines focusing on several dimensions of contentious politics regarding the reciprocal relation between mobilization and repression. The literature studies the causes of state repression in three categories: political opportunities, mobilizing structures and framing processes. I follow a different approach in this study and categorize variables as system-based and agent-based. I believe having a different perspective will allow researchers to discover various aspects of the problem of mobilization and repression.

This study contributes to the literature in two aspects. First, populism and populist discourse as causes of state repression is understudied in the literature. There is a need for testing the effect of populist discourse on state repression. Second, agent behavior is studied in the literature as if it only determines the non-structural dimension of the system. This study contributes to the literature by analyzing the process of contention with regards to the capacity of agents to manipulate the structure of the system and narrow opportunities for other actors. This study argues that populist discourse is an agent-level variable that causes change in structural variables such as openness of political opportunity structure and state capacity for repression.

The structure of this thesis is as follows. In Chapter 2, first I review state repression literature to locate the current research in its relevant context. I classify explanations in the literature in two categories, which are system-level and agent-level explanations. After discussing the gap in the literature, I introduce theory of populism by discussing in detail to understand the logic behind how populist discourse could cause state repression. Later, I introduce the methodology of this study. I explain the case selection process and the compatibility of case selection to the purpose of this study. I also introduce the key concepts of this study and how I operationalized each variable. In Chapter 3, I examine the cases in detail. I examine Gezi Park Movement, the Egyptian Revolution and Occupy Wall Street Movement, respectively. For each case, first, I give a brief background to the movement. After I introduce the empirical evidence of state repression, I will analyze the discourse of the heads of state in each case, to measure populism level in their discourse. Finally, I try to explain the level of repression in this case by applying the theoretical model. The following chapter, Chapter 4, deals with hypothesis testing and evaluation of the cases. I evaluate the results of case studies and discuss whether the hypothesis was confirmed. In the concluding chapter, I sum up the research process and results.

CHAPTER II

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

In this chapter, I introduce the foundations of this study. I start with a literature review, in which I classify the literature in two categories and discuss in detail. Then, I discuss theory of populism and its implications regarding the context of this study. Finally, I introduce methodology, research design and key variables of the study.

2.1. Literature Review

The purpose of this study is to test the effect of populist discourse on state repression of nonviolent mobilization. For this purpose, I answer the following questions in this chapter. Why does repression occur in some democracies during nonviolent civilian mobilization while it does not in others? What causes difference in repression levels in different democracies? What causes similar repression levels between a democracy and an autocracy? To answer these questions, I review the literature that touches upon the question: why do governments repress mobilization? To answer this question, in this chapter, I review the literature of the causes of state repression in the context of contentious politics. I categorize explanations in two levels, which are agent-level and system-level explanations. Later, I put forward my approach to the issue.

The emergence and development of contentious politics have been studied under three broad dimensions, which are political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes (McAdam 1996, 2). Political opportunities refer to the structural opportunities and constraints facing the agents (McAdam 1996, 2). Mobilizing

structures refer to forms of formal or informal organization available to agents (McAdam 1996, 2). And framing processes refer to processes of social construction that mediate between opportunity and action to legitimate and motivate an action (McAdam 1996, 2). The variation in types and outcomes of mobilization is a consequence of multiple variables of different combinations of these three dimensions. In other words, the effects of these factors are interactive with each other.

In this study, I do not classify explanations of state repression according to the three dimensions mentioned above. Instead, I sort them according to their levels of analysis. My purpose is that a) to provide to the students of contentious politics a different perspective which would help them discover different relations between variables, and b) to exhibit that the interaction between different levels of the social system is understudied in the literature.

2.1.a. Agent-level Explanations

The first agent examined in this study is “contenders”¹. There are two factors determining the character of state repression towards the mobilization. These are a) threat imposed by the mobilization and b) weakness of the mobilization. The first line of argument is that mobilization that is threatening to the power-holders or governments is more likely to face repression (McAdam 1982; Bromley and Shupe 1983; Stockdil 1996; Wisler and Guigni 1999; Davenport 2000). McAdam (1983), for example, suggests that protests that use confrontational tactics are more likely to be repressed, while Bromley and Shupe (1983) asserts that having revolutionary or radical goals increases repression. “Threat” is a convincing explanation since it has

¹ In this study, I use the words “protester”, “contender” and “dissident” interchangeably.

been supported by many studies in the field (see examples in della Porta 1995; della Porta, Fillieule, and Reiter 1998).

The second explanation of repression argues that weakness of mobilization increases repression. The logic is that repression of strong mobilization may result in the success of mobilization and states do not risk to be ridiculed by an unsuccessful attempt of repression (Earl 2003). Therefore, they only repress mobilization they believe they can successfully repress (Earl 2003). Some studies suggest that minority groups and the poor are considered weak by governments (Piven and Cloward 1977), while others (Wisler and Guigni 1999) state that media coverage is a factor that strengthens mobilization and decreases repression given that media opens a mobilization to the public and provides support for mobilization.

Some scholars argue that threat and weakness jointly cause repression (Stockdill 1996; Piven and Cloward 1977; Tilly 1978). For example, Tilly (1978) uses a two-dimensional approach and forms a model of repression in which acceptability of mobilization, operationalized as the scale of mobilization, and acceptability of group, operationalized as the power of the group, determine the occurrence of repression.

Second agent which is subject to study is the repressive apparatus of the state. Some of these apparatus studied in the literature are political institutions (e.g., Gibson 1988), military organizations (e.g., Stanley 1996), police squads (e.g., Donner 1990; Davenport 2001), and secret police/intelligence organizations (e.g., Churchill and Vander Wall 1990; Cunningham 2002). The most studied feature, which causes variation in state repression, of these apparatus is their level of autonomy. History of repressiveness, habit, diffusion, contagion, and brutality rates

are other explanatory variables, which have been studied less (Davenport 2005, chap. 1; Stockdill 1996).

Police perception of the contenders is also a strong explanation of repression. The image of contenders in the eyes of the police force, in other words, whether they are received as peaceful demonstrators or hooligans, affects the level of repression (della Porta 1995; introduction). The image created by contenders influences the legitimacy of mobilization. Notifying action beforehand is also a factor that provides legitimacy (della Porta 1995, chap. 3).

Finally, the ideological position of the president, or the government, affects the attitude of the government toward the mobilization, simply because conflicting ideologies can cause repression (Goldstein 1978). Some scholars even mention about the “ethos” of the coercive institutions and its effect on the efforts of coercive institutions to understand repressive behavior (Laswell 1941; Gurr 1986a, 1986b). Perception of government is another factor that causes variation in repression because the government acts to the extent that it perceives the opportunities.

Della Porta (1995) has made a contemporary contribution to the literature by including political propensity of governments to the equation. Della Porta (1995) suggests that governments with the propensity to “law and order” are more likely to repress civilian mobilization than those with the propensity to “civilian rights.” Public opinion has a significant role in determining the political tendency of a government (Zwerman, 1987; Green, 1990, chap.3; Cohen, 1972). As the facilitator of public opinion, media appears as a robust tool in gaining public support (Kriesi 2004). Koopmans (in Davenport 2005; chap. 7) states that repressive behavior is influenced by reactions and evaluations within the public. Therefore, public opinion is an important variable that determines government propensity towards “law and

order” or “civilian rights,” which later affects its behavior towards mobilization (Kriesi 2004).

Figure 2.1. Explanatory Variables of State Repression (Agent-level)

Agent

Mobilization	Government	Apparatus
Threat	Perception	Autonomy
Goals	Ideology	Perception
Scale	Propensity	History
Tactics	Law and Order	Habits
Perception	Civil Rights	
Weakness		
Media Coverage		
Minorities		
Allies		
Legitimacy		

In Figure 2.1., there is a sum of all the variables discussed in the literature regarding agent-level causes of state repression. Agent-level explanations provide a simple explanation of repression. However, the relation between repression and mobilization is a lot more complex to be explained in one level of analysis. In the next chapter, I will review system-level explanations of state repression.

2.1.b. System-level Explanations

The environment in which the contentious politics between contenders and governments take place is an essential factor that influences state repression. Opportunities and threats facing the agents shape their options of action and possibility of success. Therefore, rational decision-making agents in contentious politics act upon considering the environmental or systemic factors or get affected by the environment unknowingly. Systemic variables are categorized in the literature as structural and non-structural. In this section, I will describe these two categories,

namely “Political Opportunity Structures” and “political opportunities” by delineating their differences.

Political opportunities refer to non-structural openings in the environment for a particular action, while “Political Opportunity Structures (POS)” helps us to frame the structural patterns of the environment that favors a specific action. Some scholars do not focus on opportunities when studying political context; rather, they focus on “political threat.” They suggest that it is necessary to repress mobilization that challenges the forms of the system.

Opportunity structures can be considered as “covert repressive action” in which opportunities are described as “moments of weakness within mobilization that must be exploited to bring about the end of the challenging mobilization” (Churchill and Vander Wall 1990; Donner 1990; Cunningham 2002). The moment of weakness of mobilization is an opportunity because it decreases the cost of repression (Davenport 2005).

Non-structural variables of the system are particular to each case. Therefore, there is no systemic classification of political opportunities. On the other hand, it is possible to some extent to find common variables between cases that enable us to classify variables.

Political Opportunity Structure is divided into two by Tarrow as “static structures” and “dynamic structures” (McAdam 1996, 41). As static structures have a glacial speed of change, they are mostly used to explain cross-national differences in mobilization. On the other hand, the dynamic structure of opportunities has a more direct effect on the decision-making processes of repression, and it allows these processes to fashion their opportunities (McAdam 1996, 41).

McAdam (1996) argues that there are four dimension of Political Opportunity Structure, which are openness of the institutionalized political system, the presence or absence of elite allies, the stability or instability of broad set of elite alignments that typically undergird a polity, and the state's capacity for repression (McAdam 1996, chap. 8).

According to the first dimension, the openness of Political Opportunity Structure, mobilization faces less repression if Political Opportunity Structure is open (della Porta 1995). Openness includes many variables according to different scholars of contentious politics (Eisinger 1973; Tarrow 1989, 1994; Kitschelt 1986; Kriesi 1995; Tilly 1978; Tarrow 1994). Most important indicators are the formal rules and institutions of the state such as nature of the judiciary, law codes and constitutional rights, political culture related to the state and civilian rights (Eisinger 1973; Kitschelt 1986; Kriesi 1995; McAdam 1982; Tarrow 1983, 1994; Brand 1985; Kitschelt 1986; Kriesi 1991), "electoral participation" and "degree of centralization of the state" (Wisler et al. 1996; Kriesi 1995).

Second and third dimensions are about differences in the position of elites. They include elite fragmentation and alignment (Brockett 1991; Tarrow 1994; McAdam 1996; Rucht 1989b; Banaszak 1996; Tarrow 1983, 1989; Kriesi 1989, 2004), and presence or absence of elite allies (Tarrow 1989). First, instability of elite alignment creates opportunities for contenders (Tarrow in McAdam 1996, chap. 2). Second, elite division and intra-elite conflicts create opportunities for contenders to realize their action (Tarrow in McAdam 1996, chap. 2). Elite alignment and cohesion have been used as a strong explanatory variable for the emergence of mobilization. It is also studied as an outcome of mobilization, fueled by backfiring elite action

(Hirschman 1991). Additionally, elite division expands political opportunity for contenders (McAdam 1996).

The third dimension is the presence or absence of elite allies. Allies can be co-opted among elites after a division or conflict among elites (McAdam 1996, chap. 13). Successful repression of mobilization depends on the support of elites to dissident groups (Margolis and Mauser 1989, 369). Della Porta (in McAdam 1996, chap. 3) suggests that different coalitions, combinations of ally formation, cause different outcomes. For example, if “law and order” coalitions gain more favor than “civilian rights coalitions,” there is more repression (della Porta, in McAdam 1996, chap. 3).

While the first three dimensions are agreed upon by other scholars, McAdam’s (1996, 28) nonconsensual contribution is “state’s capacity for repression.” He states that state repression is more than an “expression” of the vulnerability of structure (della Porta, 1995); it is one of the dimensions of structure (McAdam 1996).

As for non-structural opportunities, Koopmans (2005) conceptualizes the effect of public opinion as “discursive political opportunity.” He suggests that there are discursive political opportunities, similar to institutional or behavioral ones, which tip governments about the level of openness of the political environment for an act of repression (Davenport 2005, chap. 7). They serve as mediators between actual opportunity structures and government. Koopmans’ conceptualization leads to the argument that protests that are condemned in public opinion as illegitimate are repressed more than protests that are supported by the public (Davenport 2006, 160).

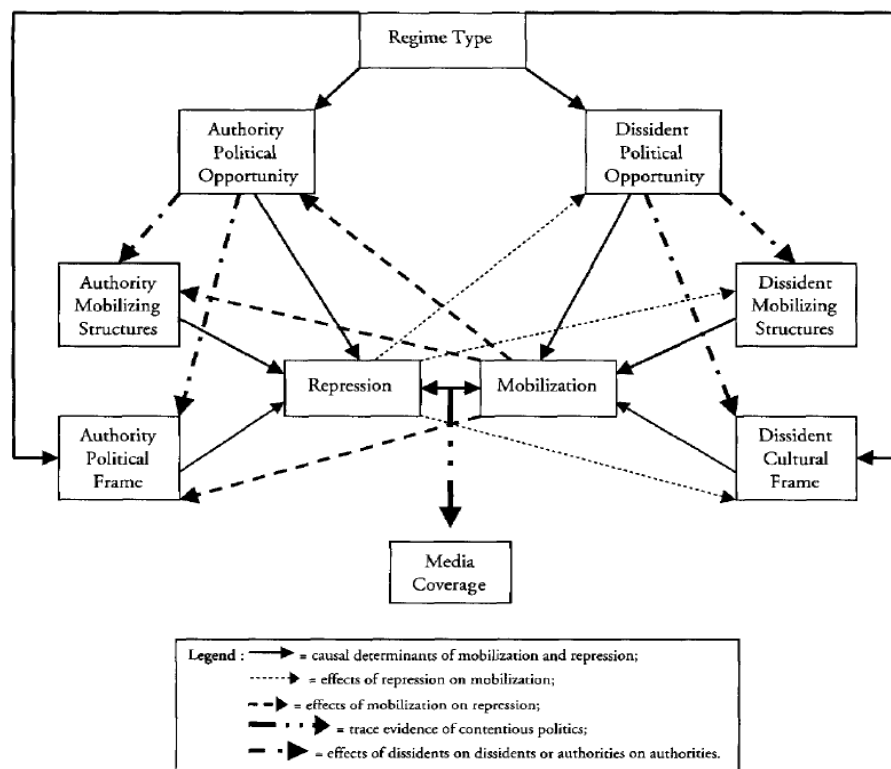
Figure 2.2. Explanatory Variables of State Repression (Systemic-level)

Structure

Openness	Elite Alignment	Capacity
Formal Rules	Fragmentation	
Institutions of State	Cohesion	
Nature of Judiciary	Stability	
Constitution	Presence/Absence	
Political Culture		
Electoral Participation		
Centralization		

In Figure 2.2., there is a sum of all the variables discussed in the literature regarding system-level causes of state repression. Together with agent-level explanations, so far, I have mentioned all the significant variables studied in the literature.

Figure 2.3. The linkages between repression and mobilization (Davenport 2005)



The purpose of categorizing the variables different than traditional categorization (as authority political opportunity, mobilizing structures and framing processes) is to stimulate different ways to assess the literature. However, I would like to briefly explain how my categorization fits the existing classification. In Figure 2.3., there is a model that displays the relations between dimensions of repression and mobilization (Davenport 2005). In the model, explanatory variables I have reviewed in this chapter are not visible, because this is not a model of explanatory variables; it is a model of dimensions. Therefore, explanatory variables reviewed in this chapter are components of these dimensions. For example, media coverage has been classified under agent-level explanations in this study. Media coverage is also an “Authority Political Opportunity/Threat. Therefore, there are not any contradictions or disunity between this study and the existing literature.

2.1.c. Defining the Gap in the Literature

Most of the work in the literature concentrates on how systemic variables determine agent behavior. The literature is focused on how agency characteristics such as strength, mobilizing capacity, and propensity are influenced by systemic factors such as regime type, openness, and capacity. On the other hand, agent behavior is studied in the literature as if it only determines the non-structural dimension of the system. Agent behavior can expand non-structural opportunities of the system in favor of itself; however, it cannot assess opportunity structures. The reason is that in consolidated regimes, either democracies or autocracies, the structure is highly institutional such that it is closed to agent manipulation.

The international system is not divided into two as democratic and autocratic states. As Carothers (2002, 9) argues, there are states that are “neither dictatorial nor clearly headed toward democracy”. They stand in a political gray zone (Carothers

2002, 9). In the political gray zone, the strength of constitutional and democratic pillars of constitutional democracy varies in a way that causes types of regimes that are different than democracy and autocracy. In this study, I will call these in-between regimes as “gray regimes”.

	Autocratic Regime	Gray Regime	Democratic Regime
Constitutional Pillar	Absent	Weak	Strong
Democratic Pillar	Absent	Weak	Strong

Table 2.1. Strength of pillars of constitutional democracy in different regimes

In gray regimes, agents, especially governments, have discovered means to manipulate and exploit the opportunity structures. Given the unique characteristics of gray regimes, agents have become capable of distorting structural elements like openness, media, and actor alignments through discourse. In consolidated democracies and autocracies, the structure creates opportunities to and favors only one party/agent of the contention, which is civilians in democracies, and government in autocracies. In gray regimes, structure introduces opportunities to both of the parties. It is distortable and open to manipulation by both the civilians and governments. This condition enables the government to repress contenders through structure using non-structural means.

With the rise of populism, and populist discourse, agents found ways of providing opportunities to influence structure. It can be empirically observed that after using populist discourse, openness becomes irrelevant, and the state’s capacity of repression increase. This argument will be further discussed in the next chapter.

To sum, there is an ongoing process, as suggested by the adherents of “political process model,” of expanding and narrowing of opportunities (McAdam 1996, 13).

Discourse is an integral part of this reciprocal shaping/framing process. In democracies with consolidated institutions, contenders have even more favorable position compared to the government because of limiting capacity of institutions and presence of strong civilian society. In autocracies, it is the opposite. In regimes that are neither democracy nor autocracy, the structure favors all the parties. Moreover, by manipulating the structure via discourse, the government indirectly represses contenders. Therefore, populist discourse causes repression under gray regimes.

There are several studies focusing on how discourse shapes public opinion and repression. Zald (in McAdam 1996, chap. 11), for example, mentions about the causal effect of discourse by noting that agents engage in “*competitive processes*” through discourse to legitimize their action. Competition processes imply competition for discrediting and coopting as well as it implies competition for legitimacy. Della Porta (McAdam 1996, 85), in a study in which she historically compares Italy and Germany, observes that law and order coalitions gained more favor at times when national political discourse was “*polarized.*” In other words, when the mobilization is presented as a “zero-sum game,” public opinion takes sides with the states. The variables “competitive processes” and “polarized discourse” are subsets of populist discourse. Therefore, they form a basis for explaining repression with populist discourse.

This study builds on the literature reviewed in this chapter. Populist discourse is an agent-level variable that causes change in openness of political opportunity structure and state capacity for repression. As an outcome of narrowed opportunities and diminished capacity, contenders are more likely to face state repression. In other words, this study contributes to the literature by analyzing the process of contention with regards to the capacity of agents to manipulate the structure of the system and

narrow opportunities for other actors. Therefore, “populist discourse” can be positioned in the complex causal chains of the model introduced in Figure 2.3 in between “Regime Type” and “Authority Political Opportunity.

2.2. Theory

Populism, as a theoretical framework, will be used in this thesis to resolve the complexity of the relation between populist discourse and state repression of civilian mobilization. In this section, I search for an answer to the question of how governments use populist discourse to manipulate democratic institutions by polarizing the society as “the people” and “those against the people” so that it gains the power and legitimacy to repress nonviolent collective civilian mobilization. Populism, as a relatively new and still improving tool of conceptualization for certain behaviors and discourse of prominent leaders in world politics today, helps us to answer this question.

In the first part, I discuss populism in terms of its ideology, strategy, and discourse. In the second part, I set forth the main argument of this study that explains state repression. Later, I will introduce the hypothesis of this study. The main argument of this study is that populist discourse cause state repression of nonviolent civilian mobilization. And the logic behind this causal relation is the idea that *superiority of the will of the people*, or the *inferiority of the interest of others who are against the people*, legitimize state repression and ease manipulation of institutions.

2.2.a. A Discussion of Populism

The minimal definition of populism is “*the idea that political sovereignty belongs to and should be exercised by ‘the people’*” (Pappas 2016). ‘The people’ has four

main features in theory of populism: 1) it can construct a political *majority*, 2) it is supposedly *homogeneous*, 3) it is situated in a *bipolar* social world, and 4) it holds the *moral* right (Pappas 2016; Abts and Rummens 2007). The core constituent of populism, thus, is the supremacy of popular will and sovereignty. A considerable part of democracy is also based on the supremacy of popular will and sovereignty. Therefore, understanding the rise of populism requires a close look at the dynamics and essence of democracy.

Abts and Rummens (2007) explains the rise of populism by the tension between “popular sovereignty” and “fundamental rights”, which are both inherent in a constitutional democracy. The duality inherent in democracy causes equilibrium as well as a stress that disturbs the functioning of institutions. The constitutional aspect of democracy emphasizes individual rights, and the rule of law, while the democratic aspect emphasizes sovereignty, majority, and transparency. Abts and Rummens (2007) argues that when one of the aspects, in our case that is the constitutional aspect, is stronger than the other, democratic aspect; populism rises to reach the equilibrium again. In other words, when instrumentally acting agents of pure liberal (constitutional) aspect discards popular sovereignty and the common good, populism exploits popular sovereignty to weaken the constitutional aspect.

Populist ideology indicates that “the people”, the homogenous majority morally supreme to the rest of society, is the ultimate sovereign. Hence, nothing should be standing against the will of the people (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013, 81). We see the reflections of this ideology most commonly in populist leaders’ discourse. They complain about how other countries, the elite, or some minorities in the society make plans to undermine the will of the people. They also offer their service to the people with the purpose of making the people great again. Polarizing society into two

antagonist groups - 'the people' and 'the others'- facilitate the manipulative actions of governments. These actions are employed to politicize and control established institutions. With the help of populist discourse, constitutional limitations on popular sovereignty - which also protects fundamental rights and institutions- loose legitimacy.

The emphasis on popular sovereignty in populist discourse causes corruption of democratic institutions in several ways. One way is by using the leverage of elections (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013, 91). Populist leaders capitalize on the very institutions of democracy, such as electoral institutions, to manipulate other institutions. Electoral majority provide populist leaders the mandate necessary to confront the established institutions that work against the people (Levitsky and Loxton 2013). Usually through plebiscites, they obtain the power of majority to close the parliament, change the constitution, and pack the courts. Since the populist leader represents the people and gives voice to the will of the people, active participation of citizens in the politics and mediated representation of the citizens through parliament becomes unnecessary (Abts and Rummens 2007). Either by closing or corrupting the parliament, the position of the parliament in the political system becomes irrelevant.

Another consequence of populist discourse is elimination of *the opposition* from the political system. Opposition, in populist regimes, is depicted as the enemy of the people, and it represents what is corrupted within institutions. Opposition depicted as 'evil' loose legitimacy to run for the elections and use the media to promote its campaign (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013, 82). Polarizing discourse of populist incumbent party and monopolized media cause growth in antagonism between the people and the opposition to the extent that the opposition becomes the enemy of the

state. They become described as terrorist or traitor. Therefore, while seemingly there are elections in populist states, they are not fairly run.

Elections are corrupted in several other ways, which are mostly illegitimate and illegal. One way is to politicize the institutions like judiciary, security forces, and electoral authorities. Another way is to harass the opposition via surveillance, blackmail, arrest, and exile. In addition to politicizing institutions and harassing the opposition, incumbents populist party close the ways for a fair play and any kind of action of opposition or dissent by co-opting the media (Levitsky and Loxton 2013).

There are other tactics of capturing the fundamental state institutions, namely judiciary, security force and regulatory agencies. One of the common tactics is to dismiss civilian servants and other nonpartisan officials from their office, and replace them with loyalists (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018, 93). Those who are loyal to the government are rewarded for their loyalty with chairs in different positions in different institutions. Having loyalist in the establishment, governments set ground for arbitrary practices and policies. For instance, governments control the police force, which is very crucial for it is the immediate response to civilian dissent. After filling the positions in institutions, the state becomes a playground for arbitrary actions of the government.

2.2.b. Populism and Nonviolent Civilian Mobilization

Nonviolent collective civilian mobilization is a form of civilian dissent. In populist regimes, like any act of opposition, nonviolent collective civilian mobilization is inclined to be rendered as an action against the will of the people. The main argument of this study is that populist discourse cause state repression of nonviolent civilian mobilization. And I stated that the logic behind this causal

relation is that the idea of *superiority of the will of the people*, in other words *inferiority of the interest of others who are against the people*, ease manipulation of institutions and legitimize state repression. In this section, I give details to the logic of the main argument and introduce the hypotheses of the study.

As explained in the previous section, incumbent populist parties, particularly their leaders, are the representatives of the will of people and popular sovereignty. Thus, it is plausible to suggest that populist governments are more likely to try to find support for its repressive actions in platforms where they can have the majority support. For instance, if the incumbent have majority in the parliament, it is likely that it will try to go to constitutional changes or enact new laws that widen the area of opportunities for repression. One slight point to consider is that the definition of who has the right to oppose the government through civilian mobilization and what the legitimate actions are mostly described vaguely in these amendments. Because the definitions are not based on universal truths, rather they are based on a construction of interest of ‘the people’.

If the governments do not have the desired majority in the parliament, it is likely that they will apply for a plebiscite. Plebiscite is a direct manifestation of majority rule. It is, therefore, an opportunity to impose any decision of repression by populist parties. In the process, populist parties are likely to use the media to manipulate public opinion and get support for repression.

In democracies, the media provides structural openness for all the agents in the system. As mentioned in literature review chapter, Wisler and Guigni (1999) found that media coverage is effective on repression because media reveals mobilization to the public and increases strength of the mobilization. This makes media an

opportunity for the mobilization. In populist regimes, media is an opportunity for the government as well. In order to discredit the grievances of the mobilization and increase its weakness, populist governments might associate the contenders with imaginary or real enemies of the state or depict contenders as national security threats against “the people.”

Contenders are usually accused of being indifferent to people’s needs at best, and cooperating with foreign forces, some terrorist groups, and etc. at worst. Populist leaders present the mobilization as a crisis that needs immediate response. They seek to convince the public that the disqualification of institutions is necessary because following institutional processes slows crisis management process and detains the solution. This way, populist leaders aim to expand their executive power (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018).

In civilian mobilization, contenders have more chances of success and less possibility of repression, if they have allies in the government or state bureaucracy as discussed in Chapter II. Depending on their closeness to decision-making bodies, bureaucrats are valuable sources of strength for the mobilization. In populist regimes, since the institutionalized opposition, that is the opposition parties and the media, is weak, it is less likely for contenders to find strong allies in state establishment. With the lack of support from institutional opposition, civilian mobilization is more likely to be repressed.

In this chapter, I have discussed the logic behind why this study suggests that populist discourse cause state repression. I have introduced two arguments. First, I argued that populist discourse mobilizes the majority support through institutions, by which majority support can be utilized in favor of the incumbent. Second, I argued

that populist discourse decrease opportunities of alliance for contenders by discrediting the possible allies in the establishment such as opposition parties.

2.3. Methodology

This study aims to discover the causal effect of populist discourse on state repression, while showing how different populist states respond to civilian mobilization than democratic and autocratic states do. In line with the research objective, I will employ a structured and focused comparative analysis. I have chosen three cases that are have different levels of state repressions. I have chosen a qualitative method because of the small number of cases in population of nonviolent civilian mobilization in national scale.

2.3.a. Case Selection

I will follow Most Similar Systems Design, comparing three cases with different outcomes in state repression. In the logic of inference of most similar systems design, if most of the explanatory variables have similar values in each case except for populist discourse and the outcomes are different, the theory's predictions should hold. However, if the predicted outcome does not hold in most similar systems design, this does not immediately mean that the proposed hypothesis was spurious. It can also mean that the independent variable of this research needs other variables simultaneously to produce the outcome. If the predicted outcome does not hold in most similar systems design, this does not mean that the proposed hypothesis was spurious, as well. It can also mean that there is a plurality of causes.

I have three cases of nonviolent mobilization; Occupy Wall Street Movement, Gezi Park Movement, and Egyptian Revolution. Many characteristics of these cases are similar in terms of "leaderlessness", populist claims of the mobilization, spatial

character, and size. Details about similarities the nonviolent character of Egyptian Revolution can be questioned compared to other two cases. However, in its context, it can be regarded as a case close to nonviolent mobilization. I examine the similarities of these cases in detail in case chapter and show that most of the variables in the literature that explain state repression are similar for the studied cases in Table 4.1 in evaluation chapter.

2.3.b. Key Concepts and Measurement of Variables

In this section, I will briefly identify the empirical indicators for the variables of this study so that we could measure them with as much validity and accuracy as possible.

2.3.b.i. Independent Variable: Populist Discourse

Independent variable of this study is populist discourse. Populist discourse is one of the manifestations of populism. There are many conceptual and operational definitions of populism. In this study, I follow Moffitt and Tormey's (2014) definition, in which they define populism as a loose style "performed and enacted" with the mentality of "us" and "them". I define populism as a total of discursive and behavioral performances.

Moffitt and Tormey (2014) define three operational features or indicators of populism as a thin centered ideology. First one is "appealing to the people." Populist strategies emphasize a certain antagonism between "true holders of sovereignty" and other groups in the society. As part of this ideology, populist leaders show that they stand against the establishment, the elite and "corrupt" institutions. Second is the demand to act immediately in times of crises. Populist leaders fabricate threats and convince their audience that threats should be dealt with immediacy and determinacy

as a strategy for erratic behavior. The third is “bad manners.” Populist leaders tend to use slang and swearing, and political incorrectness can be observed in their behavior.

Levitsky and Loxton (2013) offer a different operational definition than Moffitt and Tormey (2014). They suggest three indicators to measure populist discourse. First, anti-establishment and anti-elite expressions are frequently used by populist leaders. Second, populist leaders portray themselves as outsiders of the established system, for being an outsider means being one among the people. And third, populist leaders emphasize their personal linkages to the people, the voters.

Based on the literature, I will measure populist discourse with 6 indicators and look for a) appealing to the people, b) constructing a threat that needs immediate response, c) bad manners and political incorrectness, d) anti-establishment and anti-elite expressions, e) portrayal of the leader and his party as outsider, and f) personal linkages to the people, in the speeches, keeping in mind that there is an us-and-them mentality and a moral based approach behind each of these indicators.

I employ discourse analysis to speeches of political leaders that were incumbent or in power during the occurrence of each case. I base the discourse analysis on the indicators stated above. I gather data on leader speeches from news sources and YouTube videos.

2.3.b.ii. Dependent Variable: State Repression

In this study, I use Tilly’s (1978, 100) definition of repression, which is “any action by another group which raises the contender's cost of mobilization.” This definition is followed because its inclusiveness expands the empirical scope of the concept of repression. Instances that are supported or allowed by the government, but not directly employed should be included during the measurement of this variable.

Since I use a broad definition, I consider many operational indicators of state repression in this study. Repression includes hard repression (Davenport 2005) and soft repression (Davenport 2005). I measure hard repression with deaths, arrests, custodies, any police violence and violation of personal integrity, and political bans. I measure soft repression with media framing and creation of an unfavorable public image. Data collection of repression in each case is mostly based on secondary sources, such as news and reports.



CHAPTER III

CASES OF NONVIOLENT MOBILIZATION

In this chapter, I examine cases of Gezi Park Movement, the Egyptian Revolution and Occupy Wall Street Movement respectively in detail. For each case, I start with a detailed background of the case starting before its emergence in a chronological order. Then, I present empirical data of state repression or its absence. After measuring populist discourse, I try to explain state repression by populist discourse.

3.1. Gezi Park Movement

In this chapter, I investigate Gezi Park Movement in Taksim Square from its initiation in May 27th, when the encampment began in the park, to the eviction of encampments in June 16th. For 20 days, Erdogan speaks (thirteen in total) in almost every gathering and press conferences he attended. I have examined populist discourse in all these speeches.

I will first give a brief background of the events occurred during the mobilization in chronological order to identify temporal relations in the mobilization. I will also focus on explanatory variables studied in the literature to describe the mobilization. Then, I will analyze the discourse of Turkish Prime Minister at the time, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, to measure populist strategies in his discourse. Finally, by identifying how Erdogan has constituted structural and non-structural opportunities for repression through his discourse, I will explain the process that leads to repression as an outcome of this civilian mobilization.

3.1. a. Background to Gezi Park Movement

Gezi Park Movement is one of the biggest and most repressive civilian disobedience and mobilization case in the history of Turkey. According to the report of Ministry of Interior, the protests took place in 80 provinces of Turkey. Province of Bayburt is the single exception where there weren't any events (Everywhere Taksim 2013a). 5.341 people were taken into custody, 4.312 protesters and 694 police officials were injured, and 6 people died in the events in which almost 3.5 million people participated (Everywhere Taksim 2013a). During Gezi Park Movement, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been the most prominent figure in the media and national television.

Gezi Park Movement was initiated in May 27th (Ete and Taştan 2013, 22; TBB 2014, 42; TİHK 2014, 9). Protesters, members of Taksim Gezi Park Association (Everywhere Taksim 2013b), gathered in Gezi Park to prevent caterpillars from uprooting trees more than they have already uprooted for “Taksim Square Pedestrianization Project” (Ete and Taştan 2013, 22; TBB 2014, 42; TİHK 2014, 9)². Dissidents have camped in the park for the night to guard the park (Everywhere Taksim 2013b). Ordinary citizens joined the watch and the park has been kept crowded enough to prevent the caterpillars work in the field (Everywhere Taksim 2013c). However, caterpillars proceeded in spite of the protesters (Everywhere Taksim 2013c). Although protesters did not show any violent behavior, police that

² The project aims to remove vehicular traffic from Taksim Square and open the square to pedestrians only while re-erecting the Artillery Barracks that were once located in the field of Gezi Park (for more information, see <https://www.ibb.istanbul/CouncilDecision/RefIdIndex?refId=35972>), though there are serious discussions about the real intention and qualifications of the project (for more information see <http://web.archive.org/web/20160415110453/http://www.mimarist.org/odadan/2357-taksim-meydani-projesi-nin-ilk-etap-ihalesi-hakkinda-basin-duyurusu.html>). Since the disclosure of the project to the public in 2007, there have been many objections and different types of opposition to the project (for more information see http://www.mimarist.org/calisma_raporlari/42_donem/9_3_taksim.pdf.)

was in the park to clear the way for caterpillars has employed excessive power against the protesters, such as setting fire to tents, beating citizens, and using tear gas (TBB 2014, 42).

On May 28th, with the participation of some members of parliament, the watch continued (Mimarlar Odası İstanbul 2015). Number of protesters in the park grew (Mimarlar Odası İstanbul 2015). At 5.00 am in the morning of May 29th, police entered the park to evacuate the encampment (Mimarlar Odası İstanbul 2015). Police used tear gas and water canon to disperse peaceful protesters (Mimarlar Odası İstanbul 2015). The same day after police retreated, peaceful protesters continued the watch and number of protesters kept growing, while types of demonstrations diversified (Mimarlar Odası İstanbul 2015).

In the early morning of May 30th, police raided in the park around 5.00 a.m. and used excessive force against protesters (BBC 2019). The destruction of the park started again (BBC 2019). With the arrival of Sırrı Süreyya Önder, it stopped once again (BBC 2019). On May 31st, police increased the violence. Police set fire to the tents of protesters (BBC 2019). The violence included tear gas usage by riot police and pressured water from water canon vehicles (Ete and Taştan 2013, 23). The assertive approach of the police attracted attention to the park through social media (TİHK 2014, 91) and number of protesters in the park increased very quickly (BBC 2019). Protests spread to several other cities including Ankara and İzmir (Ete and Taştan 2013, 23). Most importantly, protesters have gained one more legal support for their claims when Istanbul 6th Administrative Court decided the abeyance of Taksim Pedestrianization project (Mimarlar Odası İstanbul 2015).

On June 1st, events spread nationally and internationally. The events were supported by Occupy Wall Street Movement in the United States with demonstrations in Zuccoti Park (RT 2013). According to the Minister of Interior Muammer Güler's statement, 90 demonstrations have taken place in 48 cities in Turkey until June 1st (TİHK 2014, 91). The increase in the number of protesters and demonstrations is due to police brutality in many of the demonstrations. There were injuries caused by police shootings, one resulting in death³ (TBB 2014, 68, 114). Minister Güler stated that 939 people were in custody, and 53 citizens and 26 police officers, 79 in total, were injured (TİHK 2014, 91). Arguing that police brutality and use of excessive force caused the increase in the size of the mobilization can be supported by KONDA's Gezi Survey Report, stating that 49.1% of the protesters decided to participate in the protests after seeing police brutality⁴. After facing civilian reaction, police was permanently removed from the park from June 1st to June 11th. However, police intervention continued in different parts of Istanbul and other cities (Mimarlar Odası İstanbul 2015).

Protests continued with millions of people around Turkey (Yaman 2014). On June 3rd, death of Abdullah Cömert from Hatay was officially clarified (Showdiscontent n.d.). It was the first announced death. On June 5th, Vice Prime Minister Bülent Arınç got together with *Taksim Dayanışması*, to hear their demands. They demanded that Taksim shall remain as a park, those in custody shall be released, and the law that prohibits demonstrations in Taksim and Kızılay shall be removed (Anadolu Türk Haber 2014). On June 6th, Erdogan got back from his North Africa trip (Anadolu

³ Ethem Sarısülük in Ankara Güvenpark.

⁴ This survey was conducted during the protests.

Türk Haber 2014). On June 14th, Ethem Sarısülük died (Showdiscontent n.d.). Protests continued until June 15th. On June 15th, police intervened in the park again while families and children were sitting in the park (Mimarlar Odası İstanbul 2015). After the evacuation of the park, protests continued for days.

3.1. b. State Repression in Gezi Park Movement

During Gezi Park Movement, protesters and the opposition faced many types of repression. First of all, between May 28th and September 6th, 164 out of 5532 demonstrations have been dispersed (TİHK 2014, 41). According to Turkish Doctors Union, there were 8.163 people registered to hospitals, medical centers, and infirmaries around protest sites, with 164 people having head trauma, 63 people having critical wounds, and 11 people having eye-losses (TİHK 2014, 68). There are many instances of maltreatment by police such as closing escape routes for protesters after using gas, using gas in closed areas with no escape routes, adding chemicals to the water in water cannons, and aiming directly protesters with the cannons (TİHK 2014, 75). During the first 20 days, police used 130.000 canisters of tear gas, from the annual stock of 150.000 (Yaman 2014). 16 people have died due to police violence (TBB 2014, 102-111)⁵. 5.513 people were taken into custody all around Turkey, usually accused with being a member of criminal enterprise, provocation, supporting the events on social media, damaging public property. (TBB 2014, 144). 189 people have been arrested, and 15 were fined (TBB 2014, 140). Imam and muezzin of Dolmabahçe Mosque were relieved from duty and transferred to another mosque because they stated that they did not see anyone getting in to the mosque with beer bottles (Hürriyet 2013).

⁵ The names and details of the deaths are recorded in the cited report.

The media have been systematically repressed. According to Bia Media Report, between May 27th and September 30th, 153 journalist were injured while pursuing information (Filibeli 2016, 42). At least 48 of injured journalists were directly pounded by the police (Filibeli 2016, 42). 9 journalists were taken into custody, and among them 3 were arrested (Filibeli 2016, 42). 22 journalists and 1 academic, known for their contrasting attitude regarding Gezi have resigned, while 14 journalists and 6 academic were fired (Filibeli 2016, 42). According to PEN International's report, 845 journalists lost their jobs (Yaman 2014). Turkey's rank in World Freedom of Press Report in 2013 were 154 among 179 countries, as it is noted that Turkey was the biggest prison for journalist after the events (Reporters without Borders 2013), while its score in Freedom House Index in 2013 was partially free (Freedom House 2013).

The role that the media plays is especially crucial in framing the events and protesters, considering that the government controlled the mainstream media during Gezi Park Movement (Oz 2016, 12). According to a study examining media framing of Gezi, pro-government newspapers mostly used a delegitimizing frame to define the protests and portrayed the protesters as marginal influenced by external actors (Oz 2016, 12). They mainly focused on drama and violence in Taksim (Oz 2016, 12). Pro-government newspapers defined the goal of the protests as conspiracy (53%) and chaos (30%) (Oz 2016, 12). According to another study, pro-government media made manipulative news with discriminative and polarizing discourse (Filibeli 2016, 71).

3.1. c. Understanding Recep Tayyip Erdogan's Discourse

The list of speeches that have been analyzed in this study includes 3rd Bridge Groundbreaking Ceremony Speech on May 29th, Turkish Exporters Assembly

General Meeting Speech on June 1st, Directorate General of State Archives Opening Ceremony of New Service Building for Ottoman Archives Speech on June 2nd, Teke Tek Interview with Fatih Altaylı on June 2nd, Atatürk Airport Press Conference on June 3rd, Speech in Joint Press Conference with Morocco Prime Minister on June 4th, Speech in the 2nd Meeting of High Level Strategic Cooperation Council between Turkey and Tunisia on June 6th, Common Future Conference for Turkey and European Union on June 7th, JDP Ankara Meetings on June 9th, Speech in Adana Şakirpaşa Airport on June 9th, JDP Group Meeting on June 11th, JDP Central Office Extended Provincial Heads Meeting on June 14th, and Ankara Sincan Meeting on June 15th. There are 13 speeches in total, given in 20 days.

Erdogan gave his first speech on May 29th.⁶ To justify the construction of the project, Erdogan explains how the project will be serving to the citizens. He mentions that they will “*pedestrianize the square and open to public service*”⁷, and “*revive the history in the park.*” He emphasizes that “*people will walk around there [in the landscape of the square].*”

To discredit contenders, he condemns the contenders for ignoring the service of JDP and for being disrespectful to the history of Gezi Park. He also very openly gives no recognition to the demands and actions of Gezi Park dissidents through his discourse: “*Some comes to Taksim saying this and that, making demonstrations here and there.*” This statement shows that he does not take the demonstrators seriously. Right after, he says “*whatever you do, we have made a decision and we will*

⁶ Data for his speech is gathered from YouTube video, named “3 Üncü Köprü Yavuz Sultan Selim Temel Atma Töreni Başbakan Konuşması LOGOSUZ 29 Mayıs 2013” (YouTube 2013a).

⁷ Translations in this study are not exact translations. They are based on the meaning.

implement it’ and shows with certainty that he is not open to the demands of the minority in the park.

While demonstrations continued in many cities of Turkey, Erdogan gave another speech in the afternoon of June 1st in Turkish Exporters Assembly General Meeting⁸. It was right after the events have gone viral, spreading to many cities and growing incredibly in number. In this speech, Erdogan’s target audience includes the opposition parties in addition to the contenders.

Erdogan discredits the contenders more assertive than the previous speech. He does not only address the protesters as civilian opposition to policies of the government. He accuses them for being antidemocratic and ungrateful for JDP’s services. He suggests that there are protesters in the park who have dark, illegal connections to justify his noncompliant and uncooperative attitude. He very explicitly doesn’t give any recognition to the demands and actions of Gezi Park contenders in his discourse. He says “*if you object to historical Artillery Barrack, we will build it. If you object to dissembling of trees, we will make it greener than before*”, meaning protesters doesn’t have any legitimate reason to protest. Indeed, right after that, he says environment is not what really bothers the protesters. The reason why Erdogan labels protesters as antidemocratic is that he recognizes any means of expressing public opinion other than elections, such as protests, as antidemocratic⁹. Erdogan suggests that demonstrations are antidemocratic and illegitimate because, he suggests, the protests caused harm to the surroundings and increased tension by provocations.

⁸ Data for this speech is gathered from YouTube video, named “Başbakan Erdoğan'dan, Gezi Parkı Açıklaması..! MUTLAKA İZLEYİN.” (YouTube 2013b).

⁹ In the beginning of his speech, he explains his reasoning at length by referencing the principles of democracy and democracy in Turkey.

Second, Erdogan aims to absolve JDP and the police force. He tries to picture himself and his party as environmentalist by listing the trees planted and national parks and forests established in JDP's incumbency and how he fought for the forests of his country. As to the excessive use of force by police, he accepts the excessiveness and ensures that a team is investigating the situation. However, he also protects the police by emphasizing that there are marginal groups in the park and it is hard for the police to establish order in the fields. He adds that the police force have followed the law as much as possible and "*if necessary, tear gas should be used by the rules. This is the case everywhere in the world.*"

Third, Erdogan aims to discredit the opposition parties, especially Republican Peoples Party (RPP). He uses five types of discourse for this purpose. First, he accuses RPP for "*working day and night to provoke the protesters*", "*cooperating with illegal organizations*" and asks RPP to stop "*its provocative discourse and attitude that encourage conflict, anger, hatred and violence.*" He suggests that the actual goal of the opposition party is ideologically driven by its desire to have the municipality office. Second, he portrays the opposition party as incompetent and unskillful, by stating that "*there is a big opposition gap in Turkey and it causes dysfunction in the political system*" and that "*because the opposition cannot succeed in the elections, it drifts behind masses and involves in demonstrations without considering whether it is compatible with its principles.*" Third, he suggests that RPP's mentality is to oppose to the welfare of the state and development in economy. And finally, he defines RPP with words such as hypocrite, liar, slanderer and insincere.

For the first time since the initiation of the events, Erdogan defines the events as a "conspiracy" organized by RPP against the government. He suggests that "*using*

trees as excuse, nobody has the right to increase tensions” and calls to the people to “see the conspiracy run behind the events.” He says that there are both sincere and insincere protesters in the area and the media have been manipulating the sincere protesters with fake news and lies. He also addresses the international media for the first time, stating that “those who gave us advice should first look at their own countries.”

Forth, Erdogan begins to compare his party to RPP. He mostly focuses on the services provided to the people as the basis of comparison. “*RPP made a similar decision (about another barrack in Istanbul) but they failed to do it” and “how many trees have RPP planted”* are several examples. However, he also compares the number of partisans and the capabilities of two parties to gather people to meetings.

The speech on June 1st includes populist components such as appealing to the people, presenting JDP as the people’s party which takes care of and represents the oppressed, presenting the opposition party RPP as an elite party which is indifferent to the people’s needs and has oppressed the majority during its incumbency, emphasizing majority support for JDP in every opportunity, presenting the contenders as a threat to the welfare of the people and a threat to the national security, requiring immediate action of the people against the contenders and using slang expression.

Erdogan gave another speech on June 2nd in Directorate General of State Archives Opening Ceremony of New Service Building for Ottoman Archives¹⁰. There are several differences from the previous speech on June 1st. While explaining the

¹⁰ Data for this speech is gathered from YouTube video, named “Başbakan Erdoğan. Üç Beş Çapulcu'nun, Tahriklerine Papuç Bırakmayız” (YouTube 2013c).

project, Erdogan adds “a mosque” to the previously planned project in reply to the request of one of the audiences during the speech.

While addressing the contenders, he continues to mention the illegitimacy of their actions by saying “*if anyone is searching for a dictator, look at Taksim, Ankara, there and there*” or “*those who harm the property of the people, who is going to pay for them? We will, this country will.*” He adds the word “marauder (*çapulcu*)” to his vocabulary. He also maintains “*Gezi is a conspiracy*” and “*the goal is ideological*” discourse.

In order to absolve his party, he adds “*I am not the master of the people, I am a servant*” and “*dictatorship is not in my blood, not in my nature (cibilliyet)*” to previous “*we are environmentalists*” defense. While addressing the opposition party, he again accuses RPP for provocation; “*it is RPP mentality that supports those who terrorize.*” Finally, he doesn’t show any compliance with Gezi Park protesters, saying “*I will not get permission from a couple of marauders; the people have given us permission (regarding the project).*” In addition to the previous speech, Erdogan begins to use argot and increases his polarizing discourse. He renders words such as “dictator” and “terror” meaningless by using “dictator” out of its actual meaning, as a figurative expression, in order to divert the attention on criticisms he received.

On June 2nd, Erdogan also has an interview with Fatih Altaylı on the national television¹¹. In this speech, to discredit the protests, Erdogan emphasizes the physical harm made to public property and he states that “*the place of democracy battle is ballot boxes, not the squares*” and that they are performing freedom of speech by

¹¹ Data for this speech is gathered from YouTube video, named “Teke Tek - Başbakan Erdoğan / 2 Haziran 2013” (YouTube 2013d).

anti-democratic and illegal means. To justify the actions of his party and the police force, Erdogan states that there are groups in the park, as well as sincere and harmless citizens, who imperil the surrounding and that it is his duty as state executive to take precautions and provide security to his citizens.

Additionally, he describes the events as anti-democratic because they cripple the daily lives of ordinary citizens. He references to the election results in the history of JDP to support his previous statement that the people have given him permission regarding the project. Finally, he adds, “*we are a party that is in equal distance to the 76 million.*” To discredit the opposition, he accuses the opposition party RPP with oppressing the people and those similar to Erdogan when RPP had incumbency. He adds that RPP still tries to suppress the people. Erdogan considers the civilian reaction in the park equivalent to RPP oppression. To show that RPP isn’t any longer in a position of oppression, he compares the number of partisans and the capability of two parties to gather people to meetings.

Finally, Erdogan shows no sign of compliance, stating that “*there is no reason to ask how to do this project.*” He continues “*Gezi is a threat*” discourse, stating that RPP is behind the events, provoking marginal groups and carrying an ideological campaign in Gezi Park, that social media attempts to terrorize people by producing fake news. He adds that there are some media groups that withdraw advertisements from newspapers and television to cause distress in the economy. Erdogan warns “*his*” people, his citizens, to be aware of these games. He answers external reactions to the events by stating that “*Police intervention in Europe is no less than that in Turkey.*”

On June 3rd, Erdogan gives a press conference in Atatürk Airport¹². To discredit the dissidents, distinctly, he makes fun of “pots and pans” demonstrations. He adds “*thank God, nobody died in burning vehicles (set to fire by protesters)*”, on the same day Abdullah Cömert in Antakya died as a result of police brutality. He briefly mentions his success in elections to justify his incoherence with the authority he got from the majority. He emphasizes external links and external support once again.

While Erdogan emphasizes the provocation and terrorization of the events, he talks in complete contrast in the Common Press Conference with President of Morocco on June 4th¹³. He states that “*it is not that everywhere is terrorized around the country, especially not in Istanbul. Everything will be settled in a couple of days after I turn back.*” He warns the media to make correct news about what happened to the trees in Gezi Park. He briefly points to his services during his office in Municipality of Istanbul, external links and cooperation with marginal groups and the real goal of the protests, the same content with previous speeches. On June 6th, in the 2nd Meeting of High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council between Turkey and Tunisia¹⁴, he briefly points to the harm made by protesters and the contribution of the project to Istanbul. On June 7th, in Common Future Conference for Turkey and European Union¹⁵, he states that “*those in Gezi are not addressee, representatives in the parliament are real addressee.*”

Speeches Erdogan has given abroad display that he adopts different attitudes in and abroad country regarding Gezi Park Movement. He draws a safe and secure

¹² Data for his speech is gathered from the following sources: Bianet 2013; Milliyet 2013; Haberler 2013; Hürriyet 2013.

¹³ Data for his speech is gathered from the following source: Haber Expres 2013.

¹⁴ Data for this speech is gathered from the following source: Akşam 2013a.

¹⁵ Data for this speech is gathered from the following source: TRT Haber 2013.

picture of Istanbul when abroad, while he constantly draws a terrorized and chaotic picture of Istanbul in the country.

From June 9th onwards, Erdogan's speeches lose content related to Taksim Pedestrianization Project. He securitizes the events and the protesters and becomes completely irresponsible. There are many speeches given on June 9th, including speech in Adana Şakirpaşa Airport¹⁶ and several meetings in different parts of Ankara¹⁷. He protects the police force, stating that police force fights for security and safety from "anarchists" and "terrorists." To discredit the dissidents, he increases moral-based discourse such as "*they are low to swear to their Prime Minister*", "*if you are that annoyed, check the dictionary for the definition of marauder. It means a person who maraud, raider.*" His references to religious morals in phrases such as "*they attacked my head-scarfed girl. On top of that, they entered Dolmabahçe Mosque with beer bottles and their shoes*" attracted a lot of criticism for they were not based on truth and they were touching a soft spot of the society considering the potential of polarization.

To absolve his party and himself, apart from mentioning his services and commitment to democracy and rule of law, he uses a romantic discourse, such as "*we started off with our ceremony*", "*we account before no one but Allah*", "*we have grown up as the generation of Asım*", and "*Prime Minister of this country is not Prime Minister of some lobbies, Prime Minister of this country is the voice of silent masses. We are against the oppressors and beside the oppressed.*"

¹⁶ Data for this speech is gathered from the following source: Radikal 2013.

¹⁷ Data for Ankara speeches are gathered from the following sources: İnternet Haber 2013; En Son Haber 2013; Star 2013; Milliyet 2013.

To discredit the dissidents, he aimed at the opposition party RPP, equating it with all of the opposition in Gezi. He defines the party as “*those who do not have their share of morals*”, “*presumptuous*”, “*those who cannot digest Turkey’s development*”, “*those who do politics by hiding behind the demonstrators*”, and “*those who do not respect the authority of the people.*” He reminds the people how RPP oppressed head-scarfed women by enabling them from attending university, how they do not respect faith, and how they fed off the earnings of the people. Erdogan reminds trash mountains in Istanbul and states, “*RPP mentality is filth.*” Finally, he refers to the number of people in his meeting and says, “*You are the people, but are not these people, too?*” Erdogan lists some of the threats the people have faced in history such as gangs, mafia, junta, and interest rate lobby, and warned the current ones with paying the price. He puts particular emphasis on interest rate lobbies, that do not want Turkey to strengthen, and international media, that attacks the government.

In JDP Group Meeting on June 11th¹⁸, Erdogan continues to use Gezi Park Movement as an election campaign, attacking RPP and absolving JDP. He regards the events anything but a civilian mobilization. Erdogan states that “*it (the mobilization) changed its goal and became something entirely different*”, “*it aims power and reputation, the press has been systematically wrongly informed*”, and “*it is impossible to see it as an innocent resistance.*” The reason, he suggests, is RPP, taking advantage of the events to remove JDP from power and “*take back their decades-long privileges.*” Erdogan adds that “*the project was accepted with the approval of members of RPP.*”

¹⁸ Data for this speech is gathered from the following source: Akşam 2013b.

To discredit the dissidents, he points to the banners hanged on the façade of ACC. He defines them as “*shred (paçavra)*” and “*separatist posters.*” He describes the protesters as “*low to hang those illegal shreds*” and “*to burn Turkish flag.*” He adds, “*They have committed hatred crime.*” To justify JDP’s actions, he defines the events as “*the minority imposing its lifestyle to the majority*” and adds “*we are the witnesses of Mamak prisons, Metris prisons, Diyarbakır Prisons (referring to September 12th Coup). We are a mobilization that has seen how the minority imposed its lifestyle to the majority to the hilt.*” He ensures that he “*did not bring %50 against anyone, would not pour anyone into the streets.*” However, he warns insincere protesters that “*there isn’t any toleration any longer.*”

On June 14th, in his speech during AKP Central Office Extended Provincial Heads Meeting¹⁹, Erdogan focuses on his plebiscite offer regarding the fate of the park. He says, “*Does a dictator have plebiscite?*” He plays with the word “dictator” again, using the word in a different context than critics use and relating the word to an irrelevant condition of dictatorship. Moreover, he does not recognize the decision of the European Parliament, showing his decisive hostility towards external actors interfering in the situation.

Finally, he openly claims that Gezi is a threat to the government, saying “*do not do politics by showing us scaffold*” and “*you need to have a strong attitude on these issues fabricated about your president. Menderes was very soft in this country, very tame. He was taken to the scaffold.*” On June 15th, in JDP Sincan Meeting²⁰, he continues with romantic, moral-based discourse. He says “*my three years old grandchild wakes me up saying ‘stand upright, the people are with you’*”, “*we, as the*

¹⁹ Data for this speech is gathered from the following source: Haber 3 2013.

²⁰ Data for this speech is gathered from following sources: Habertürk 2013; Akşam 2013c.

people, have such a style of resistance, it overthrows all games and conspiracies. We resist with prayers and orisons. We resist quiet and calm. They would not understand. We overcame the darkness of May 27th, September 12th, April 27th, and February 28th”, and “my glorious people look not only with their eyes, but also with the eye of the heart. You saw the game. You felt the conspiracy.” To discredit the dissidents, he says, “they hit the car of a head-scarfed lady”, and “they attack and harass a head-scared woman waiting for her kid.” He also blames them for not being nationalists because they were entirely against the shreds of terrorists, and they attacked the police. Finally, he asks the protesters to evacuate the park, or else the police will do it.

3.1. d. Explaining Repression in Gezi Park Movement

State repression in the case of Gezi Park Movement can be explained by many of the explanations studied in the literature. The mobilization was posing a serious threat to the government because of its goals. The movement was also large in scale with its nation-wide character. The participants were representing almost all the ages, classes, occupations, ethnicities, and identities. All these factors contributed to the threat posed by the mobilization to the government.

Second, police force also did not perceive the movement legitimate and the government approached the movement in a “law and order” attitude rather than with “civilian rights” approach (Atak and della Porta 2016). Therefore, the repression can be explained by the features of state apparatus of repression as well.

Third, the movement was weak in many aspects. Public support was not sufficient to prevent state repression. The “public” was politically parted into two groups.

Polarization in the society and demonization of the contenders affected ally relations of the movement and public support.

Among the structural variables, state capacity offers a strong explanation for state repression. Turkey is a strong state with resources of enforcement. However, being in a democracy, Erdogan's government was not able to easily mobilize the sources needed to repress the movement. There were some control mechanisms, and structural limitations to his governance. Therefore, "government type" causes a relatively close "authority political structure". However, structural limitations were not strong enough to fully prevent repression. Using populist discourse, Erdogan manipulated the structure to widen his "authority political opportunities." Populist discourse enabled him to increase state capacity of repression by mobilizing sources, and to decrease the strength of the mobilization by affecting public opinion.

Appealing to the people by praising, asking for support, opening their eyes against the threat, and protecting their rights helps a populist leader to utilize his most effective leverage for repression, which is majority support. Knowing that he has the majority vote in all the elections starting from its incumbency, Erdogan tries to make use of this fact by offering plebiscites and diverting the real goal of the protests into inter-party conflict or an election campaign²¹. Because the support of the majority for JDP and Erdogan is relevant in these circumstances.

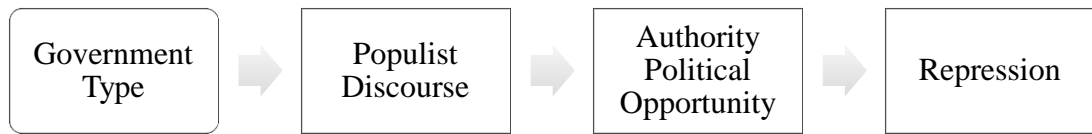
Second, displaying the dissidents and the events as illegal, anti-democratic and externally supported, presenting the goal of the mobilization as ideological, and emphasizing the harm done by a small percentage of the protesters, Erdogan creates

²¹ According to KONDA Survey (2014), the real goals of the protests were to fight for freedom with 34.1%, fight for rights with 18.4%, against dictatorship with 9.7%, change of government with 9.5%, and for democracy and peace with 8.0%.

opportunities for immediate and arbitrary intervention in the park and repression to the dissidents. He succeeds in effecting public opinion about the events regarding its goal. According to KONDA Survey, %54 of the people think Gezi was a conspiracy against Turkey and protesters were subject to provocations, while 40% believe it is demand for rights and freedom in a democratic manner (KONDA 2014, 40). He also states that “*those in Gezi are not addressee, representatives in the parliament are real addressee*”, knowing that if the parliament was responsive to the will of minorities and if it was a sufficient check and balance mechanism; the protesters would not have needed to camp in the park in the first place.

Third, disparaging the dissidents and the opposition, using moral judgments to define them, emphasizing their mistakes, past and present, relevant and irrelevant, increase the weakness of the mobilization, in other words, increase the opportunities for repression. The role that the media plays is especially crucial in framing the events and protesters, considering that the government controlled the mainstream media during Gezi Park Movement (Oz 2016, 12). According to a study examining media framing of Gezi, pro-government newspapers mostly used a delegitimizing frame to define the protests and portrayed the protesters as marginal influenced by external actors (Oz 2016, 12). They mainly focused on drama and violence in Taksim (Oz 2016, 12). Pro-government newspapers defined the goal of the protests as conspiracy (53%) and chaos (30%) (Oz 2016, 12). According to another study, pro-government media made manipulative news with discriminative and polarizing discourse (Filibeli 2016, 71). Media framing, therefore, creates opportunities for repression by influencing public opinion.

Figure 3.1. Causal Linkages in Gezi Park Movement



Regarding the discussion above, we can say that the type of Erdogan's government, populist government, was an antecedent to populist discourse. Populist discourse caused an open opportunity structure for repression because it weakened the constitutional aspect of the regime by utilizing the democratic aspect, which is based on popular sovereignty. Therefore, when constitutional aspect is weaker than democratic aspect, we observe repression of civilian mobilization.

3.2. The Egyptian Revolution

In this chapter, I will examine the Egyptian Revolution taken place in Tahrir Square in Egypt, to conduct Most Different Systems Analysis, comparing Egyptian Revolution and Gezi Park Movement. For this purpose, I will first give a brief background of the events that occurred during the revolution in chronological order to identify characteristics of the mobilization. I will focus on explanatory variables studied in the literature to describe the mobilization. Then, I will analyze the discourse of the Egyptian President at the time, Hosni Mubarak to measure populist strategies employed. Finally, I will explain the process that leads to repression as an outcome of this civilian mobilization.

3.2. a. Background to the Egyptian Revolution

Egyptian Revolution officially started in January 25th in Tahrir Square in Cairo, with the gathering of 10.000 protesters. The protests lasted for 18 days from January 25th to February 11th, 2011, the date that Hosni Mubarak resigned from the office

(Abul-Magd 2012, 565). The goal of the protests was initially ending police brutality, termination of 30 years-long state of emergency, social inequalities, and endemic poverty caused by systemic corruption and mismanagement (Rashed 2011, 23). After experiencing excessive police brutality, the goal changed into the removal of the regime (Rashed 2011, 23; Abul-Magd 2012, 565).

Mubarak's regime was having its 30th year on the power when the Revolution began. Egypt was ruled by the National Democratic Party (NDP), led by Hosni Mubarak. In addition to the monopoly of government, NDP had a long history of abuse of power and corruption (Najjar 2011, 8). The constitutional amendments proposed by Mubarak in 2006 were perceived as a strategy to consolidate Mubarak's dictatorship and weaken the opposition further by the opposition groups and human rights activists (Najjar 2011, 8).

The foundations of ultimate protests that overthrow Mubarak have been laid for many years of strikes and protests. Some scholars start the date from 2000 when the 2nd Palestinian Intifada (Joya 2011). Indeed, despite the ignorance of most Western media, Abou-El-Fadl (2012) shows in his article that a substantial part of the protests included Palestine theme, and the anti-Mubarak opposition was partially built on Palestinian activism.

Before the Second Intifada, informal opposition groups that have already been unhappy with Mubarak government's policies and actions have been building networks with other domestic actors and transnational protest networks (Abdelrahman 2011). The activism of these groups included publications, websites, seminars, talks with government officials, conferences and protests (Abdelrahman

2011, 410-411). Groups with different political ideologies and agendas have been gathering under umbrella organizations such as Kifaya (Abdelrahman 2011).

Workers of Egypt have also been trying to display their grievances of political and economic reforms since 1998, by organizing sit-ins, strikes and protests (Joya 2011). According to Bishara (2015) there were more than 3000 protests between 2004 and 2010 with the participation of more than 2 million workers. Joya (2011) and Ismail (2012) explain this wave of protests and the Egyptian Revolution with neoliberal policies of Mubarak, beginning in 1980s. First of all, these scholars argue that neoliberal policies were not implemented in a liberal fashion. Therefore, they caused a type of crony capitalism that favored political loyalty and state power was transferred to the hands of the elite. Inequality in terms of social power and wealth has been growing ever since and with the addition of other policies harming the rural population, the resentment of the disadvantaged groups in the society have grown as well.

Second, with the implementation of neoliberal policies, the state has withdrawn from providing welfare provisions. An autonomous space of social and economic relations was created with the development of informal labor and housing markets. Opposition groups were able to mobilize in this autonomous sphere.

In 2005, National Assembly for Change (NAC), which includes public figures and representatives from the opposition, was formed, demanding constitutional change and structural reforms (Mady 2013). In 2010 elections, many citizens that are not satisfied with the election process and results initiated a sequence of protests and demonstrations (Mady 2013). Finally, *April 6th Youth Group* and “*We Are All Khalid*

Said” *Facebook Group* have organized the protests of “Police Day” in Jan 25th (Mady 2013).

The events started with a call on Facebook to gather in the square on Jan 25th, on the “Police Day” commemorated for the police officers who stood against British demands in 1952, Thousands, mostly among the youth and intellectuals, have gathered in Tahrir Square to protest Mubarak’s regime (Abul-Magd 2012, 565). The estimated number varies from 5000 to 20000 (Said 2014, 122). After dispersed by the police, protesters gathered again in the square three days later, on the day they named “Friday of Rage”, and they occupied the square (Abul-Magd 2012, 566).

Police force of Egypt under control of General Habib al-Adli, the Minister of Interior, did not have a good reputation among the society for its repressive history (Ismail 2012). Ismail (2012) suggests that the protests were against the police as an institution of everyday government. Indeed, in addition to the squares, police stations and detention centers were surrounded by the protesters during the uprising, many of them being burned down in the first few days (Ismail 2012).

The square was divided into zones (Abul-Magd 2012, 566). One similarity of this civilian mobilization with Gezi Park Movement is that it is spatially bound to a square because of encampments. Tahrir encampment, with checkpoints, clinics, stages, concerts, announcements, lived as a self-sustaining unit for 18 days (Abul-Magd 2012, 566). Starting from day one, police employed excessive force on the protesters, which resulted in three deaths from protesters and one death from police officers (Aljazeera 2011).

On January 26th, there were bloody clashes in Suez (Aljazeera 2011). The revolution was spreading to other big cities. On Jan 28th, 11 civilians were killed in

Suez and 1.030 injured worldwide (Aljazeera 2011). Seeing that police force was not sufficient to prevent the expansion of events, troops were ordered in Suez, Cairo, and Alexandria (Aljazeera 2011). Involvement of the military did not help soothe the events, and rather it increased the violence.

On May 29th, Mubarak gave a short speech, and on Jan 30th, he announced new vice president and new cabinet (Aljazeera 2011). After Mubarak's first statement, in which he announces that he is not resigning from the office but promises reform to the constitution (Aljazeera 2011), the number of protesters on February 1st reached to almost 1 million (Rashed 2011, 25). Police was a lot more violent, causing 300 deaths (Rashed 2011, 25). On February 3rd, at least five people died, and many got injured in heavy gunfire (Aljazeera 2011). On Feb 5th, Egyptian Health Minister reported 11 deaths in total, while the United Nations reported 300 fatalities and News Agencies reported 150 deaths (Aljazeera 2011).

Leaders of the National Democratic Party resigned on February 5th (Aljazeera 2011). On February 8th, the protests reached the highest number since the beginning of the events. Finally, on June 11th, Vice President Omar Suleiman announced the resign of Hosni Mubarak (The New York Times 2011). On February 13th, soldiers tried to remove the remaining protesters in Tahrir Square and on February 14th, protesters left Tahrir Square (Aljazeera 2011).

Mubarak's regime was an authoritarian regime that have had strong connections with the military. He kept the political life in Egypt under control and prevented opposition and contestation to his regime (Shahin 2012). The opposition was incapable of posing a serious threat to Mubarak's regime for it was weak and fragmented (Shahin 2012). Legal restrictions, lack of motivation, lack of democratic

practices contributed to the ineffectiveness of the opposition (Shahin 2012). Effective opposition actors such as Muslim Brotherhood were either banned or harassed (Shahin 2012). The Revolution challenged the security forces, the NDP and its business cronies, and the military, with the consequences of excessive violence from the regime (Shahin 2012). In the next section, I will examine state repression in the Egyptian Revolution.

3.2. b. State Repression in the Egyptian Revolution

Mubarak has encountered the Egyptian Revolution with ferocious anti-riot police who employed excessive and lethal force. The repressive technique of the regime ranged from using “expired” tear gas and live bullets to releasing thousands of armed thugs against the unarmed civilian protesters (Shahin 2012). The clashes between pro-Mubarak thugs and anti-Mubarak protesters was later recognized as “the Battle of Camels” as pro-Mubarak people ran into the square on horses and camels (Saidin 2018).

In Egypt case, we observe military intervention in the events along with police brutality. During the events, rough measures of control like using riot-control tactics were employed. The regime shut down the Internet to prevent collective mobilization through social media (Saidin 2018). One of the indicators of excessive use of force by police is the number of deaths and injuries. Although the number change according to different institutions, most of the studies agree on more than 800 deaths, with causes ranging from police brutality, conflicts between groups, etc., and 6500 injuries caused by use of firearms and tear gas (Abdelmottlep 2015; Puspitasari 2017, 166). There are also indications that fatal shootings were pointed by snipers (Abdelmottlep 2015). There are hundreds of eye injuries, especially from January

28th to February 2nd (Abdelmottlep 2015). There are cases of random shootings and crushing some demonstrators by armored police vehicles (Abdelmottlep 2015).

A very case-specific instance of repression is the fear of using an ambulance. Injured protesters were afraid to use ambulance because ambulances were tied to state security and intelligence (Abul-Magd 2012, 566). Another specific example is ordering troops to the site. There is an area where military forces were deployed near Tahrir Square and surrounding the square, spreading fear over the protesters (Abul-Magd 2012, 566). We observe another indicator of repression, disabling the means of communication, as regime cuts the internet and mobile-phone connections on Jan 28th (Rashed 2011, 23; Bauer and Schweitzer 2013).

In addition to hard repression, the regime have utilized soft repression tools as well. According to Hamdy and Gomaa (2012) 60% of the framing of government newspapers have portrayed the protests as a conspiracy on Egyptian state. 35% of the framing has presented “foreign influence” as the main cause of the protests and suggested that those who are in the square for demonstrations are not the civilians, but they are political groups who have political and illegitimate desires (Hamdy and Gomaa 2012).

Since the regime was autocratic in Egypt during Mubarak’s governance, it has been hard to acquire valid and reliable data of repression during the revolution. There are many instances that are not recorded or reported. The numbers of death, injuries and arrests are mostly close estimations. Nevertheless, the level of state repression in the Egyptian Revolution is considerably high, even according to the approximations.

3.2. c. Understanding Hosni Mubarak's Discourse

In this section, I will examine Mubarak's discourse during the Egyptian Revolution and try to identify populist elements in his discourse. I analyze two speeches given by Hosni Mubarak during 18 days of the Egyptian Revolution. The list of speeches that have been analyzed in this study includes Address on the National Television on January 29th and Address on the National Television on February 10th.

On Jan 29th, Mubarak talks for the first time regarding the events (Reuters 2011). In his short speech, he mostly focuses on absolving and legitimizing the actions of the government and the police force, without any appeal to the people and without using moral-based discourse, except for the phrase: *"I will defend Egypt's safety and stability and its people's wishes, for that is the responsibility and the trust endowed in me when I swore an oath in front of God and the nation to protect it."*

He stresses that he values freedom of expression by stating that *"My instructions to the government have stressed on providing it with an opportunity to express the opinions and demands of the citizens"*, and *"Fellow citizens, those protests came to express the legitimate expectations for more speed in halting unemployment and enhancing living conditions, fighting poverty and standing firmly against corruption"* (Reuters 2011). However, he points to a *"fine line between freedom and chaos"* and states that he *"lean toward freedom for the people in expressing their opinions as much as I hold on to the need to maintain Egypt's safety and stability"* (Reuters 2011).

He emphasizes the importance of security and safety and his responsibility to provide it to the people. He expresses his regret for the loss of innocent lives and

continues with stating his dedication to democracy and welfare. *“My conviction is still set to continue political, economic and social reforms for the sake of a free and democratic Egyptian community”* and he ensures that he *“will proceed with new steps that affirm our respect for the independence of the judiciary ... new steps toward more democracy and freedoms ... new steps to face unemployment and increase the standard of living and services ... new steps to stand by the poor and those with limited income.”*

His discourse of absolving the actions of the government and the police increases the opportunities for repression. However, only a small part of the repressions occurs from this opening of opportunities. For example, on February 1st, there happens a clash in Alexandria between pro-Mubarak groups, allowed by the military to the square with sticks and knives, and anti-government protesters (Aljazeera 2011). On June 2nd, it turns into a battle between two groups (Ahram Online 2012). He discredits the protesters, suggesting that their actions are far from a dialogue. Finally, he describes the goal of the protests as aimed at shaking the stability and an attack on legitimacy.

On Feb 10th, Mubarak gives another speech (BBC 2011). This speech, first of all, includes more populist elements with nationalist content than the one on Jan 29th. He emphasizes the services he made for his people and his country, mentioning his military service, his fight against foreign dictation, the deaths he faced, and his hard work for *“the revival of Egypt and its people”* (BBC 2011). He appeals to the people, considering itself from the *“family”*, by addressing the citizens as *“brother citizens”*, and *“from the heart, a father's dialogue with his sons and daughters.”* He uses a positive tone while addressing and shows support and understanding to the protesters. He says he is *“proud of the new Egyptian generation calling for a change*

to the better, dreaming and making the future” and considers their demands as “just and legitimate.”

He promises to punish those responsible for hurting innocent victims. He glorifies the will of the people, stating, *“The will of its people will not break. It will be back on its feet with the honesty and loyalty of its people, all its people”* and *“Egypt will remain immortal with its dignified people with their heads held high.”* However, we observe no polarization in this speech because 1) Mubarak addresses any opposition other than protesters, and 2) he never refers to another group, using the words *“those”* or *“them.”*

Second, Mubarak defines the events as a “crisis.” He mentions the harm made by the events to the economy and says he will continue the dialogue to overcome those difficult times. Third, Mubarak mentions about the steps he has been taking to answer the demands of the protesters, including, *“setting up of a constitutional committee that will look into the required amendments of the constitution and the needed legislative reforms”*, *“setting up of a follow-up committee expected to follow up the sincere implementation of the promises”*, and *“issuing instructions to complete the investigation about last week's events (the clashes between pro- and anti-Mubarak demonstrators) and submit its results immediately to the general prosecutor for him to take the necessary legal deterrent measures.”* He adds that he will not run for president in the next elections.

Overall, we observe some of the indicators of populist discourse in Mubarak’s speeches. He appeals to the people in some occasions, presents the protests as a threat to the nation, links himself to the people personally and has a moral-based

approach to the events. However, the frequency and portion of populist discourse is notably few.

3.2. d. Explaining Repression in the Egyptian Revolution

There is consistent use of force against a couple of thousands of protesters camping and gathering on Tahrir Square until February 1st of 2011. Although there was intense police brutality, the number of protesters did not increase significantly. The significant increase happened after Mubarak said he is not resigning. Because Mubarak's insistence on keeping the power affected "dissident cultural frame" such that framing Mubarak as a dictator gained strength among the contenders and toleration for his actions decreased. In other words, the change in Dissident Cultural Frame increased mobilization.

Until Mubarak announced his resignation, the protests and state repression continued consistently, with no significant difference. Since he resigned right after his speech on February 10th, which contained few elements of populist discourse, the repression cannot be explained with populist discourse strategies. I will look at the literature to explain state repression in Egyptian case.

State repression in the case of the Egyptian Revolution can be explained by many of the explanations studied in the literature. The mobilization was posing a serious threat to the regime because of its goal of altering the regime and the government. The movement was also huge in scale with its nation-wide character. The participants were representing almost all the ages, classes, occupations, ethnicities, and identities. All these factors contributed to the threat posed by the mobilization.

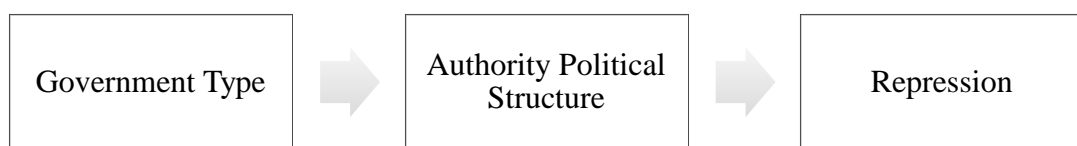
Second, the government also perceived the mobilization as a threat to its power. Mubarak, having understood the goal of the mobilization, have initially dismissed all

the members of cabinet to please the contenders and eliminate the threat. However, the strength of the threat posed by the mobilization was larger than he perceived or expected. Mubarak’s government was also an “order and stability” government, which was inclined to ignore civilian rights for the sake of order and stability.

Third, state apparatus of repression was known for its history of repressions and violent actions. The military and security and intelligence forces were under control of the government. The police was a part of everyday government. Therefore, the repression can be explained by the features of state apparatus of repression as well.

Among the structural variables, state capacity offers a strong explanation for state repression. Being an autocracy, Mubarak’s government was able to easily mobilize the sources needed to repress the Revolution. There weren’t any control mechanisms, or structural limitations to his reign. He also had the military and the police force at his disposal. The opportunity structure for repression was highly open to Mubarak. I use Figure 3.2 to show the causal linkages between variables discussed here.

Figure 3.2. Causal Linkages of Repression in the Egyptian Revolution



Since the purpose of this study is to specifically show that “populist discourse” is one of the causes of state repression, I do not discuss other variables in detail. I am using all the variables that explain state repression as similarities to other cases so that I can generate a similar case comparison that would enable me to isolate “populist discourse” as an explanatory variable. Additionally, since there isn’t any need for populist discourse in an autocracy, “government type” is an antecedent

condition to “populist discourse”. Therefore, I use government type as the initial explanation of repression in Figure 3.2.

Regarding the discussion above, we can say that the type of Mubarak’s government caused an open opportunity structure for repression because it lacked constitutional and democratic aspects. And we can conclude that autocracies produce high levels of repression in civilian mobilization. In other words, when there is not any constitutional and democratic aspects to the regime, we observe high levels of repression of civilian mobilization. In the next section, I will follow a similar structure to the analysis of this chapter to examine Occupy Wall Street Movement.

3.3. Occupy Wall Street Movement

In this chapter, I will examine Occupy Wall Street Mobilization taken place in Zuccotti Park in the United States. For this purpose, I will first give a brief background of the events that occurred during the mobilization in chronological order to identify characteristics of the mobilization. I will focus on explanatory variables studied in the literature to describe the mobilization. Then, I will analyze the discourse of US President at the time, Barack Obama. Finally, I will explain the process that leads to repression as an outcome of this civilian mobilization.

3.3. a. Background to Occupy Wall Street Movement

The movement was triggered by New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s proposed budget cuts on June 14th, 2011 (Knuckey et al. 2012, 8). Bolton et al. (2013, 5) suggests that activist in Lower Manhattan have already been laying the ground for direct action before the call of the magazine *Adbusters*. The group named New Yorkers Against Budget cuts have slept in streets in June and July to protest the

arrangements in the budget (Bolton et al. 2013, 5). They have formed The New York City General Assembly (NYCGA), which was later the consensus-based decision-making body of the mobilization, in the encampment near City Hall (Bolton et al. 2013, 5).

After a couple of minor gatherings, *Adbusters* and NYCGA organized a meeting in Wall Street (Knuckey et al. 2012, 7). However, when they found the street barricaded by the police, they headed for Zuccotti Park, which is a privately owned public space (Knuckey et al. 2012, 7). Protesters stayed for the night in the park and started forming an encampment (Knuckey et al. 2012, 7). The encampment became a self-sustaining unit that includes “a kitchen; a medical station; a comfort station with clothing, sleeping supplies, and other amenities; a media center with internet access; a security team; a significant library; information desks; facilities for signage and art creation; programs for education and activist training; and speaker’s corners” (Knuckey et al. 2012, 8).

The NYCGA had its first General Assembly in “Liberty Square” (Bolton et al. 2013, 5). Until the evacuation of the encampment in Zuccotti Park on November 15th, there have been many demonstrations and marches in New York City, and other campsites enacted in different parts of the city and the country (Knuckey et al. 2012, 9). The regular people of the city, who are not from the activist community, haven’t been paying attention to the demonstrations until September 24, when the police arrested 80 people during a march to Union Square (Bolton et al. 2013, 7). Later, for the first two weeks, the movement had its highest participation and visibility. On October 1st, police arrested 700 people during a march to the Brooklyn Bridge (Bolton et al. 2013, 7).

On October 13th, Brookfield Properties, the owner of Zuccoti Park, sent a notice to Occupy Wall Street in order them to vacate the park for cleaning, which was later postponed (Bolton et al. 2013, 7). On October 15th, on the Global Day of Action, police arrested 45 people during the demonstrations in Times Square (Bolton et al. 2013, 7). Occupations spread over 950 sites around the city in the following days (Bolton et al. 2013, 8). However, On November 15th, the encampment in Zuccoti Park have been dismantled by the police and 200 people trying to hold the park were arrested (Bolton et al. 2013, 8).

The demands of the protesters were systemic reforms against social and economic inequality, and decrease the corporate influence in the democratic process (NYC General Assembly 2011). “The Declaration of the Occupation of New York City”, released on September 29, includes all the grievances of the movement (NY General Assembly 2011). The declaration starts with an expression of a feeling of mass injustice and anger towards corporate forces (NYC General Assembly 2011). The grievances range from catastrophic economic policy, student debt, and media control, to identity-based discrimination, corporate loopholes, and animal cruelty (NYC General Assembly 2011).

The mobilization had a base in the society such that the polls conducted in December 2011 were suggesting that 48% of Americans agreed with the concerns of Occupy (Knuckey et al. 2012, 14). According to one estimation, demonstrations spread to more than 600 cities in the country, out of which 74 cities were among the biggest 100 cities of the US (Turner 2017). However, the most massive turnout was on October 15th with 100.000 around the country (Turner 2017).

3.3. b. State Repression in Occupy Wall Street Movement

According to a comprehensive report prepared as part of the “Protest and Assembly Rights Project”, there are 130 reported incidents of repression during the events (Knuckey et al. 2012, 72). Among these, 97 allegations are bodily force like striking, punching, shoving, grabbing, throwing, kicking, dragging by police (Knuckey et al. 2012, 73), 41 incidents include weapon use such as Batons, Pepper Spray, Barricades, Scooters, Horses, which only 7 cases of pepper spray use (Knuckey et al. 2012, 75). Seventy protesters were arrested during the eviction, and 700 protesters were arrested during their walk to Brooklyn Bridge (The Guardian 2011). One thousand three hundred protesters were arrested in New York City in total (NY Daily News 2011).

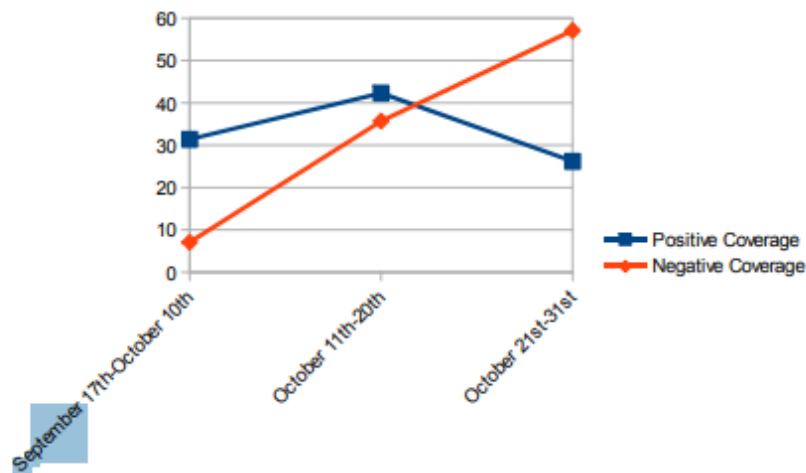
In addition to these, police have used flex cuffs, causing severe injuries, to restrain the protesters (Knuckey et al. 2012, 78). There are allegations of medical care delays and denial (Knuckey et al. 2012, 80). There are soft repression examples, like the police being present during protests and marches, including police officials from Counter-Terrorism and Disorder Control Unit (Knuckey et al. 2012, 82).

As for media repression, there are some instances that police did not allow press near to protest areas, like Zuccotti Park during the eviction (Knuckey et al. 2012, 85), abused journalists physically (Knuckey et al. 2012, 89), and arrested 85 journalists in 12 cities (Knuckey et al. 2012, 87). Journalists were subject to arrest, the threat of arrest, physical violence (Knuckey et al. 2012, 84).

Media framing of the events, in the very beginning, were in favor of the protesters. However, negative coverage has consistently increased during the events (Turner 2017). Based on Figure 3.3, we can imply that the eviction of the

encampment in Zuccotti Park was an outcome of the increasing negative framing of the movement.

Figure 3.3. Media Coverage in Occupy Wall Street Mobilization (Turner 2017, 162)



3.3. c. Understanding Barack Obama's Discourse

In this section, I will examine Obama's discourse during the Occupy Wall Street Movement and try to identify populist elements in his discourse. President Obama has given two speeches regarding Occupy Wall Street Mobilization between September 17th and November 15th.

On October 6th, Obama gives his support to the protesters, stating that he understands their frustration (Kroll 2011). He points to the 2008 crisis, which is the biggest one after the Great Depression (Kroll 2011). Obama blames the ones who caused the crisis and talks about what his party did to make things right (Kroll 2011). He points to Republican mentality on how to deal with the crisis is wrong because it is the same that caused it in the first place (CBS News 2011). He ensures that he will prevent abusive practices and "put in place financial rules that protect the America people from reckless decision-making and irresponsible behavior" (CBS News 2011).

There is no evidence of populist discourse in Obama's speeches. On the contrary, in his speech on October 16th, he emphasizes M. L. King's belief in the "creative tension of nonviolent protests" and states that "*At this moment, when our politics appear so sharply polarized and faith in our institutions so greatly diminished, we need more than ever to take heed of Dr. King's teachings*" to prevent any polarization (The Washington Times 2011). He also emphasizes his understanding of justice, "*if he were alive today, I believe he would remind us that the unemployed worker can rightly challenge the excesses of Wall Street without demonizing all who work there*", in order to prevent polarization between Occupy supporters and the Wall Street citizens (The Washington Times 2011).

Obama's discourse doesn't include any of the indicators of populist discourse. He appeals to the audience as citizens of the country rather than "the people". He approaches in a fine and rational manner to the situation. He avoids unprofessional and daily language. He intentionally avoids any type of polarizing discourse and he recognizes the rights of the protesters of Occupy Wall Street to demonstrate and express their grievances as legitimate and rightful citizens of the USA. He doesn't present the demonstrations or the protesters as a threat to national security. He emphasizes the central role of the constitution and the institutions.

The frequency and length of his speeches show that he recognizes that confronting the contenders is constitutionally the local government's job. As the head of the federal government, he only advert to the aspect of the movement that concerns the federal government, such as constitutional rights of the protests and 2008 financial crisis. Therefore, Obama's discourse is not a populist discourse.

3.3. d. Explaining Repression in Occupy Wall Street Movement

In the case of Occupy Wall Street Movement, there is an increase in the number of protesters after police intervention on September 24th. The biggest amount of number observed in a demonstration is 100.000 as stated before. There is not also any severe fluctuation in police repression. The highest number of arrests was on October 1st, 700 arrests, when 5000 people walked to Brooklyn Bridge (Rolling Stone 2011). But there is not any increase in mobilization after. Stability in mobilization implies that police repression fails to affect the cultural frame of dissidents, mobilizing structure, or political opportunity. Even after the eviction, we do not observe a significant change in mobilization behavior.

Many factors can explain the absence of state repression in Occupy Wall Street Movement. I will look at the literature to identify these factors. First of all, the mobilization was posing a threat to the government because of its goal of changing the system that allows social inequality and injustice.

The movement was also huge in scale with its nation-wide character. 950 encampments in more than 80 cities and demonstrations with the participation of millions implies a large scale movement. The participants were representing almost all the ages, classes, occupations, ethnicities, and identities. All these factors contributed to the threat posed by the mobilization.

Second, the local government also perceived the mobilization as a threat to its power because claiming their right to the city, protesters complicated the political relations of the local government with other political actors. The involvement of corporate forces to city politics and their constitutionally recognized rights as property owners complicates the power relations in this case. Considering that

Zuccotti Park is a privately owned public space, both Brookfield Properties and the citizens of the New York City has rights on the park. Mayor Bloomberg understood the rights of the citizens on the park, and managed the situation by pleasing both sides.

Despite the mobilization posed a threat to the government and despite the fact that it was a strong movement, we do not observe high levels of state repression in this case. Agent-level explanations fail to explain this case. Therefore, I will start considering structural variables that explain state repression.

Among the structural variables, state capacity offers a strong explanation for state repression. The USA is a strong state with resources of enforcement. However, being in a democracy, Obama's government was not able to easily mobilize the sources needed to repress the movement. There were control mechanisms, and structural limitations to his governance.

The opportunity structure for repression was very close for Obama to capitalize on. The constitution of the USA is very clear on the limits of each levels of government in the country and limits of power that can be used against the civilians. Therefore, government type is the reason for a close "authority political structure" and low "state repression". In this case, I use Figure 3.4 to show the causal linkages between variables discussed here.

Figure 3.4. Causal Linkages of Repression in Occupy Wall Street Movement



Since the purpose of this study is to specifically show that “populist discourse” is one of the causes of state repression, I do not discuss other variables in detail. I am using all the variables that explain state repression as similarities to other cases so that I can generate a similar case comparison that would enable me to isolate “populist discourse” as an explanatory variable. Additionally, since there isn’t any need for populist discourse in a democracy, “government type” is an antecedent condition to “populist discourse”. Therefore, I use government type as the initial explanation of repression in Figure 3.4.

Regarding the discussion above, we can say that the type of Obama’s government caused a close opportunity structure for repression because the government had strong constitutional and democratic aspects. And we can conclude that democracies produce low levels of repression in civilian mobilization. In other words, when constitutional aspect is stronger than democratic aspect, we do not observe repression of civilian mobilization.

This chapter argued that the United States government responded to the demands of Occupy Wall Street Mobilization by supporting the mobilization in discursive level, but not using populist discourse. Since the structure of the United States did not allow anti-democratic behavior of government, in other words, it decreased the authority political opportunity for repression; state repression of the mobilization was low. In this chapter, first, I gave a background to Occupy Wall Street Mobilization. Then, I showed empirical evidence of low state repression and lack of populist discourse. And finally, I applied the theoretical model to the case. In the next chapter, I test the hypotheses of this study in light of the analyses made in this chapter.

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION OF THE CASES AND HYPOTHESIS TESTING

In this chapter, I will compare the cases based on the data I introduced in detail in case chapter to test the hypothesis of this study. I put forth three hypotheses for empirical testing, which studies the effect of populist discourse on repression. The main hypothesis of this study suggests that during a nonviolent mobilization, populist discourse of the leaders increase state repression by increasing opportunities for state repression. Thus;

Hypothesis 1: Populist discourse increase repression of nonviolent mobilization.

In the first case, Gezi Park Movement, Prime Minister of Turkey used high levels of populist discourse. Since Turkey is a gray regime, in other words constitutional limitations are somewhat effective and yet not strong enough, Authority Political Opportunities were expected to be limited. However, the repression level observed in this case is not consistent with the regime type. Because, with the help of populist discourse, the government was able to expand both structural and non-structural Authority Political Opportunities. Thus, this case strongly supports the main hypothesis.

In the second case, the Egyptian Revolution, President of Egypt, Hosni Mubarak, used low levels of populist discourse. Since Egypt is an autocracy, Authority Political Opportunities were limitless. Therefore, populist discourse was not much needed. Considering the high level of repression, in this case, we can say that this case individually fails to support the hypothesis. However, it does not disprove the

main hypothesis. Because populist discourse might not be a necessary condition, it might be a sufficient condition.

In the third case, President of the United States, Barack Obama, did not use populist discourse. Since the United States is a full democracy, Authority Political Opportunities were highly limited. The repression level was low. Therefore, this case individually does not support the main hypothesis.

	The Egyptian Revolution	Gezi Park Movement	Occupy Wall Street Movement
Goal of Mobilization	Regime Change Institutional Reform	Policy Change Institutional Reform	Policy Change Institutional Reform
Geographical Scope of Mobilization	National	National	National
Tactics involved in Mobilization	Mixed (Violent and Nonviolent)	Mixed (Violent and Nonviolent)	Mixed (Violent and Nonviolent)
Media Coverage of Mobilization	Negative	Negative	Initially positive, negative towards the end
Repression Apparatus	Police Force, Intelligence and Military	Police Force and Intelligence	Police Force and Intelligence
State Capacity of the State	High	High	High

Table 4.1. Similarities between the Egyptian Revolution, Gezi Park Movement and Occupy Wall Street Movement

Compared together, these cases offer a more meaningful picture. As shown in Table 4.1, the most valid explanations of state repression such as goals, tactics and state capacity, are similar for each case. Table 4.2 and 4.3 show the differences between the cases. We see that when the governments are authoritarian and

democratic, in other words when constitutional pillar is either too strong or absent, we do not observe any populist discourse. This means that populist discourse is not useful in these cases. Indeed, when the constitutional pillar is strong, there is not any room for populist discourse, while when constitutional pillar is absent; there is not any need for populist discourse.

In binary comparisons, we clearly see how populist discourse effect state repression. In Table 4.2, we see that when populist discourse is used by non-authoritarian governments, state repression increases. For Gezi Park Movement, it is not expected to observe repression a lot higher than Occupy Wall Street since Turkey had a non-authoritarian regime and close opportunities. Populist discourse caused an expansion in opportunity structure, providing the government with an opening for repression.

	Occupy Wall Street Movement	Gezi Park Movement
Type of government of the country	Democracy (Non-Authoritarian)	Populist (Non-Authoritarian)
Populist Discourse as a Policy Tool	Not used	Used
Outcome	Low Repression	High Repression

Table 4.2. Comparison of Gezi Park Movement and Occupy Wall Street Movement (Outcomes are not absolute values. They are relative to each other)

In Table 4.3, we see that when populist discourse is used by non-democratic governments, state repression decreases. In this comparison, for Gezi Park Movement, it is not expected to observe lower repression level than the Egyptian Revolution since Turkey had a non-democratic regime with close opportunities.

While populist discourse expands authority political opportunities, the openness of opportunity structure cannot reach to the level of an autocracy.

	The Egyptian Revolution	Gezi Park Movement
Type of government of the country	Authocracy (Non-Democracy)	Populist (Non-Democracy)
Populist Discourse as a Policy Tool	Not used	Used
Outcome	High Repression	Low Repression

Table 4.3. Comparison of Gezi Park Movement and the Egyptian Revolution (Outcomes are not absolute values. They are relative to each other)

	The Egyptian Revolution	Gezi Park Movement	Occupy Wall Street Movement
Type of government of the country	Authocratic	Populist	Democratic
Populist Discourse as a Policy Tool	Not used	Used	Not used
Repression	High	Moderate	Low

Table 4.4. Comparison according to government types (Repression levels are not absolute values. They are relative to each other)

The auxiliary hypotheses of this study suggested that state repression differs according to government types. Since populist discourse is observed in populist governments, this study suggested that populist governments repress more than democratic governments and less than autocratic governments. In Table 4.4, we see that from autocracy to democracy, state repression lowers.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This study tried to discover the causes of variation in state repression similar mobilization cases. The central claim was that populist discourse increase state repression of nonviolent mobilization because populist discourse expands political opportunities for repression. This argument has been tested by comparing three cases of nonviolent mobilization, which are Gezi Park Movement, Occupy Wall Street Mobilization, and Egyptian Revolution. I have employed Most Similar Systems Design by selecting three very similar cases with different outcomes to discover the cause of difference in the outcome.

This study was built on two gaps in the literature. First, it brought up populism and populist discourse as an issue that effects repression. Second, it analyzed the process of contention with regards to the capacity of agents to manipulate the structure of the system and narrow opportunities for other actors. In other words, this study emphasized the determinative power of agents on repression in relation to structure.

I have examined the cases by starting with their background and chronological order of important moments during the evolution of cases. Then, I have put forth empirical evidence of state repression and measured the discourse of head of states by indicators of populist discourse. Finally, I tried to explain state repression in each case. After examining each case in detail, I have evaluated the data from each case in order to test the hypotheses based on my research design.

Comparing the cases, I showed that they are similar in terms of goals, scope, tactics, repression apparatus and state capacity. The differences were use of populist discourse and openness of opportunity structure. These results showed that populist discourse causes state repression by opening opportunity structure.

Satisfying the requirements of structured comparative case design is rare, considering the lack of empirical diversity of small-n cases. In this study, selection of the cases for comparison did not produce a perfect test for the hypothesis. However, they were sufficient enough to have confidence in the proposed hypothesis. High variations in the variables enabled us to see the causal effect. A major limitation of this study is the number of observations. Including more cases that vary in populist discourse and state repression would have provided stronger validation of the hypothesis. It would also have enabled to discover intervening variables and scope conditions. Considering the small number of studies on populist discourse, more studies testing the hypothesis of this study could contribute to the literature immensely.

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